LEWIS MUMFORD: SCHOLAR, PROPHET, MAN

A CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF THE DOCTRINE OF MAN IN THE THOUGHT OF LEWIS MUMFORD

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CHAPTER I

SCHOLAR, PROPHET, MAN

> The test of maturity, for nations as well as individuals, is not the increase of power, but the increase of self-understanding, self-control, self-direction, and self-transcendence.... For a mature society, man himself, not his machines or his organizations is the chief work of art.[1]

This statement by Lewis Mumford, whose work is the subject of this thesis, capsulizes the purpose of Mumford's writing career--the development of mature men and a mature society. His thought ranges far and wide but in each instance the question addressed is essentially the same: How can man's machines, buildings, cities, social systems enhance rather than deny his manhood? He contends that modern man's unwillingness to take this question seriously is at the heart of the present malaise.

Mumford once said of an early mentor, Patrick Geddes, that he was "the exponent of life in unity, life in its fullest development and expression...he tirelessly sought to encourage the processes of insurgence, of self-transcendence, of creativity."[2] These words apply equally if not more so to Lewis Mumford. For in his work we encounter a unified vision of life to the end that man might continually be transformed.

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[1]Saturday Evening Post, April 18, 1959, quoted in Current Biography Yearbook 1963, ed. Charles Moritz (New York: H.W. Wilson Company, 1963), p. 202.

[2]Lewis Mumford, The Human Prospect (Boston: The Beacon Press, 1955), p. 99.

Before proceeding to a statement of the specific purpose of the thesis, it will be helpful to outline Mumford's life and writing career, highlighting those books which appear pivotal. Mumford was born on October 19, 1895 in Flushing, Long Island, New York, the only child of Lewis Charles Mumford, a lawyer, and of Elvina Conradina (Baron) Mumford.[3] Although he had an early ambition to become an electrical engineer, his dislike of mathematics and a youthful love affair stimulated his desire to be a writer, and for a time he hoped to become a newspaper reporter or a playwright. From 1912 to 1919 he studied at the City College of New York, Columbia University, and the New School for Social Research under Thorstein Veblen. Although Mumford had enough credits for college graduation, he never obtained a degree. He stated on a number of occasions that he received what he desired from his studies and never felt the need for a degree.

In 1919 Mumford became an associate editor of Dial, the most distinguished American literary magazine of its day. In 1922 he contributed to Civilization in the United States: An Inquiry by Thirty Americans, edited by Harold Stearns; and in the same year published his first book, The Story of Utopias, a critical study of the classic utopias of the past. From that point until the present he has written over twenty major books and numerous articles. His last published book entitled The Urban Prospect was published in 1968. At present he is working on an autobiography. A complete list of his published books and a selected list of his articles are included in the bibliography.

Among the more important books are four which he projected

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[3]Current Biography Yearbook 1963, ed. Charles Moritz, p. 202. This source has provided basic data on Lewis Mumford's biography.

as a series in 1932 and entitled his "Renewal of Life Series." The four are: Technics and Civilization (1934), which deals with the development of technological civilization since the Tenth Century and shows how technology might be brought into harmony with human needs and desires; The Culture of Cities (1938), a volume which traces the history of cities in the Western World since the Middle Ages and sets forth proposals for new directions in city development; The Condition of Man (1944), a comprehensive interpretation of the historical development of modern man in which Mumford suggests ways out of man's present critical state; and The Conduct of Life (1951), a book which attempts to counteract the current breakdown of the human personality by means of a new understanding of the nature of human life.

Other significant books include four books which have established Mumford as a pioneer in American studies; Sticks and Stones (1924), which interprets American architecture in its social context; The Golden Day (1926), a study of New England culture in the thirty-year period between 1830 and 1860 and the impact of Emerson, Thoreau, Melville, and Whitman on that period; Herman Melville (1929), a critical study of the life and thought of Herman Melville; and The Brown Decades (1931), a survey of American culture in the last half of the Nineteenth Century. The Transformations of Man (1956) divides human history into periods distinguished by the predominance of particular human traits. Chapter titles include the following: "Archaic Man," "Civilized Man," "Axial Man," "Old World Man," "New World Man," and "Post-historic Man." The City in History (1961), which won the National Book Award for nonfiction in 1962, is a philosophical study of the role of cities throughout recorded history. In this book Mumford returns to a theme developed

in The Culture of Cities and concludes that the final mission of the city is to further man's conscious participation in the cosmic and historic process. The Myth of the Machine (1967) challenges the over-emphasis given to the part played by technics in human development at the expense of myth and dream and argues for a fuller understanding of human life. In addition to these and other books, beginning in 1932 Mumford for many years wrote a famous column of architectural criticism entitled "The Sky Line" for the New Yorker. He has contributed articles to such magazines as the American Mercury, The New Republic, Freeman, Harper's magazine, The Saturday Review of Literature, The New York Review of Books, and numerous others.

Mumford has not limited himself to writing. He is a charter member of the Regional Planning Association of America. He has taught at the New School for Social Research, Dartmouth College, Stanford University, North Carolina State College, the University of California, Berkeley, and elsewhere. He has served as a consultant to a number of city and regional planning boards and has been active through the years in supporting those causes which reflect his understanding of human life. He has been sought widely as a lecturer and counselor on such subjects as education, war and peace, the impact of the machine, contemporary architecture, and others.

This thesis does not attempt to be an exhaustive analysis of the entire corpus of Mumford's work, although it does draw on practically all his literary output. Its intention is quite specific--to analyse the doctrine of man which emerges in Mumford's thought as he ranges over a wide variety of subjects. I contend that his analysis of man's present condition and his vision of renewed man are desperately needed

at this point in history. I am in agreement with both analysis and vision in most essentials. My argument with him is a disagreement about how the vision can be manifested. Therefore, in the thesis I develop in outline form an alternative program which builds upon Mumford's but attempts to correct it and go beyond it.

The thesis includes six chapters. In this, the introductory chapter, I argue that Mumford's thought is of great significance to a world increasingly concerned with "externality" at the expense of "internality." I argue further that his thought provides a corrective to shortcomings in particular currents of contemporary theology. In the second chapter, I analyse Mumford's understanding of man's present plight and contend that though Mumford is correct in looking to a "saving remnant" by which renewal might occur, he fails to present a program sufficient to develop the internal change needed in those who are to form this remnant. In chapter three, I develop his analysis of the historical backdrop for man's present state of crisis and point to men and movements which he views as significant in forging the present situation.

In chapter four I outline Mumford's understanding of the importance of the historical enterprise and discuss at some length the two historical periods to which he looks especially for guidance in bringing about personal and social renewal. In chapter five I outline the increasingly significant role of religion in his thought and comment critically upon it. An important part of this chapter is a discussion of Mumford's contention that basic to man's nature is a "sense of the divine" at a point in history when much contemporary theology denies this "sense." In the final chapter I present as concisely as possible Mumford's concept of the ideal man, the balanced personality. I sketch his

proposal for bringing this ideal to fruition, contend that the proposal is inadequate, and offer an alternative to it.

As one would expect in an authorship that extends over a period of approximately fifty years, there have been shifts in Mumford's thought. Major shifts which will be discussed in the thesis include a deepening understanding of the nature of sin precipitated by the Fascist crisis in the Nineteen Thirties and Mumford's encounter at that time with the thought of Reinhold Niebuhr; a shift from a view of an essentially meaningless universe to one which is continually growing in meaning; a change in his attitude toward Plato, one of his early masters, which reflects a change in his understanding of the utility of Utopian thinking in general; an increasing fascination with religion; and others. But despite these shifts, the striking fact concerning Mumford's thought is not its fluctuation but instead its consistency. It is this latter which allows one to treat Mumford's work topically rather than historically, so long as one indicates at appropriate points where changes have occurred. This is the approach taken in the chapters which follow.

When Mumford was in his teens, he had an experience which in many ways influenced the remainder of his life and thought. He described it years later in the following way:

> ...I remember how shocked I was when I found out that one of my pals named Stamer, whose father was a greenpoint cigarmaker of the old '48 German stock, was a Socialist. Stamer jarred my middleclass complacency with his scornful descriptions of what had hitherto seemed a reasonable and well-balanced world, and I was gradually unsettled in all my views....[4]

I relate this story because it is akin to the experience I have had with Mumford's work. His writings have jarred me loose from many conceptions

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[4]Mumford, The Human Prospect, p. 56.

about reality which I had held for many years and have forced me to rethink the nature of men and the world in which we live. Though he has not always convinced me, his influence on my thought has been profound.

Events of recent years have made us all aware that our country and indeed the entire civilized world are in serious trouble. World wars, an increasingly militant nationalism, environmental pollution, racial conflict, overpopulation coupled with famine, a rampant technology and other factors are breeding increasing pessismism among large numbers of people. Coupled with this pessimism is a new sense of urgency issuing in proposals for action among individuals and groups concerned with human survival. Unfortunately, however, with few exceptions the diagnosis of our ills and the proposals for change which emerge tend to reflect the peculiar prejudice of our particular historical era. One might call this prejudice the "cult of externality," which proceeds on the basis of the following assumption: Our contemporary dilemmas have arisen because present social, political and economic structures have been outstripped by phenomenal change over the past several decades. This being the case, the argument continues, the solution to the problems is that of finding more adequate structures. The problems are considered to be "external" to the human person so that the solutions are also seen as external.

It will be helpful to outline two examples of this approach before considering how the work of Lewis Mumford can serve as a corrective. A sophisticated example of "externality" is that expressed by Charles Frankel in The Case for Modern Man, first published in 1955.

After discussing the problems facing Mid-Twentieth Century Man, Frankel states definitively, "But however difficult these problems with which liberalism is confronted may be, it is clear that they are institutional, not psychological--political, not moral."[5] According to Frankel, man's problems are "external" to him in that they arise not from a distortion of his psychological or moral life but from his institutional life. Therefore, the way to solve the problems is to find new institutions and more adequate political structures. As Frankel sees it, the basic problem facing men is the drift of decision-making authority into key positions which are anonymous, the growth of an institutional structure which denies genuine options to the individual, and the increasing inadequacy of inherited mechanisms of public consent to control the situation. No existing institutional model, he continues, is adequate to contain this development.

Frankel's solution is consonant with his statement quoted above--one structural in nature. He makes three specific suggestions: (1) "changes in existing legislative processes so as to make party responsibility for political decisions clearer and more definite,"[6] (2) "experimentation, wherever possible, with methods of administrative decentralization and devolution,"[7] but most important, (3) "the extention of the activities of both the state and the voluntary mass associations into fields where they are not now active."[8] Frankel's proposals are sound as far as they go, but because he suffers from the bias of "exter-

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[5]Charles Frankel, The Case for Modern Man (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1956), p. 205.

[6]Ibid., p. 203. [7]Ibid., pp. 203-204. [8]Ibid., p. 204.

nality" he does not realize that the problem is moral as well as political, that the change needed is internal as well as external.

Frankel's concern for structural and institutional change is echoed by Bayard Rustin. In speaking specifically of racial injustices in the United States, Mr. Rustin contends that the basic issue confronting American society in the mid-Nineteen Sixties is not prejudice but inadequate jobs and housing. In the December 1967 issue of the Journal of the Division of Higher Education, United Church of Christ, Mr. Rustin commented:

> If society is constructed one way, prejudice is able to rise to the surface and be socially and politically organized. If on the contrary, society, particularly its economic life, is organized in another manner, prejudice can be reduced to an irreducible minimum. Martin Luther King's assailants stoned him in Chicago last December, not fundamentally because they were prejudiced, but because they were living in a society where there were inadequate jobs and inadequate housing for everyone. Given such conditions, it takes but two or three potential Hitlers to organize dissatisfied people to throw stones. This probably could not have occurred if full employment and adequate housing were realities in Chicago. Both Negroes and whites have to accept the fact that the basis of prejudice is economics and stop all this foolishness about psychology.[9]

As a short-term strategy for immediate social gains, Rustin may well be right. Overconcern for attitudinal changes may divert one from pressing for necessary social change. But unless one is also concerned with the internal life of men and the basic values by which men live, any long-term improvement of the human condition will not occur. It is this latter which neither he nor Frankel adequately understands. Without renewed men, renewed structures are not likely to emerge, or if they do, they will simply become the locus of further corruption.

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[9]Bayard Rustin, "Funding Full Citizenship," Journal, Vol. VI, (December, 1967), p. 6.

We should not be surprised at our society's neglect of internal renewal. For several centuries, at least since the advent of the modern world, man's emphasis has not been on his inner nature but the outer world in which he lives. He has busied himself exploring and conquering new hemispheres, he has developed sophisticated extensions of his own organs to do his work for him, he has formed more complex forms of social units. More recently he has split the atom, descended to the depths of the seas, reached out to far-off planets. This mood contrasts dramatically with that of his medieval forebearers whose major preoccupation was the internal life of the self and who viewed the external world as relatively simple and stable.

Admittedly, we have witnessed in the half-century since Sigmund Freud a renewed interest in man's internal nature and one which will be felt with increasing intensity. Both psychiatry and psychology have made great strides in recent years and have sparked new inquiries into the nature of man. One can cite in this regard the impressive work of Erich Fromm, Alfred Adler, Karen Horney, Henry Sullivan, and numerous others. But given the present milieu, this remains a minor key. Further, given the determinist nature of scientific inquiry which has held almost undisputed sway until very recent years, the methods of contemporary psychology have often simply been a reflection of that used in looking at the external world. Under the spell of determinism, man's internal life has been seen as the result of hereditary and environmental forces which could consciously be regulated once these forces were understood.

A classic example of this stance is John Watson, the behav-

ioral psychologist, who insisted on restricting his research to those aspects of human behavior which could be measured by strict, laboratory measurement. He refused to consider any aspect of man which could not be objectively measured and spent much time trying to determine how behavior could be controlled through prolonged conditioning. This is still a widely held notion in the psychological sciences. Indeed, with the increasing importance of the social sciences and their "statistical" emphasis as well as the demands of the advertising media, it may become even more pronounced in the years immediately ahead. In a world dominated by externality, both problems and solutions are influenced accordingly.

Since this is the situation which presently prevails, an added significance has been taken on by those few scholars who have, over the past several decades, contended that the ultimate answers to man's dilemma are not external to him but are instead rooted in a deeper understanding and manifestation of what it means to be a man. For they may be able to assist men in formulating a vision of man which can take us beyond our present impasse into a world in which life once again can flourish. Such a man is Lewis Mumford. For though he is by no means unconcerned with the need for more adequate social structures to meet the demands of a new time, he rightly believes that ultimately the answers to man's problems rest in a deeper understanding of his history and nature and his place in the created order. He believes that the over-emphasis on "externality" needs to be balanced with "internality," for it is only when one grapples with what it means to be a man that the necessary social structures will evolve which will support a full human life. It is to this effort that he has dedicated his life.

Simply stated, the heart of Mumford's thought is the attempt, drawing on the insights of many peoples, epochs, and disciplines, to discover the meaning of human life in order to renew it before worldwide catastrophe moves upon us. One can see in the midst of all Mumford's work one unifying theme--the attempt to understand what it means to be a man and how contemporary society denies man his manhood. Mumford argues with great eloquence that the Twentieth Century world crisis is insoluble and the world community unattainable without an interior change in man. "The very possibility of achieving a world order by other means than totalitarian enslavement and automatism rests on the creation of unified personalities," whole men of great vision who are capable of precipitating in turn a further transformation in the life patterns of their fellows. A very small cadre or even "a single human personality may overcome the apparently irresistible inertia of institutions," in the same way as did Jesus and Mohammed centuries ago. Admittedly, he states, the possibilities of such a "miracle" occurring are not very great. "On purely rational terms," Mumford is inclined to agree with "the dying judgment of H.G. Wells" that man has run his course. But if salvation is to come, it will come by means of a transformation of the human self. Man's fate even now is locked in the hearts of living men.[10]

It is this thrust which constitutes Mumford's significance for contemporary life and thought. In a world dominated by externality, he stands as one of the few significant prophets who seeks transformation of the inner man. Man's destruction of his environment, his unequal dis-

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[10]Lewis Mumford, The Transformations of Man (London: George Allen and Unwin, 1957), pp. 187, 181-182.

tribution of the wealth of the planet, his militant nationalism, and other problems now afflicting our society are symptoms of a disease rooted in contemporary man's personality and will be solved only when this disease is eradicated. Mumford knows this and helps point the way to solutions.

But he is important for another related reason: the concreteness of his analysis. He does not merely state that contemporary man's interior life is distorted but proceeds to document this distortion by way of an analysis of man's social and economic institutions, his architecture, and his misuse of technics. As an historian of great sensitivity, Mumford both traces the roots of our present ills and points to historical periods which men today neglect at their peril. Further, his broad knowledge in a multitude of areas and his synthetic ability allow him to interelate the many facets of human life in a way that few of our time, or indeed of any time, have been able to do. Finally, his gift for great eloquence is probably unparalleled by any other social philosopher alive today. He is able to place profound thought in language both interesting and moving to the intelligent layman as well as the scholar, and thus serves as an important bridge between the world of specialized scholarship and the interested reader. Geoffrey Brunn, author of Europe in Evolution, once said of him, "...how can we resist a writer who forges such lovely phrases?"[11] The chapters which follow will attempt to apply flesh and blood to these assertions.

Mumford is important not only to the world at large. He has

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[11]Geoffrey Brunn, Review of The City in History, by Lewis Mumford, The Saturday Review of Literature, XLIV (April 15, 1961), p. 17.

a great deal to contribute to the present theological scene, particularly in that broad area of theology generally regarded as the doctrine of man. As manifested most skillfully in the thought of Harvey Cox, Professor of Theology at Harvard Divinity School, there is a strong tendency in contemporary theology to accept man's present definition of himself as normative and to begin the theological task from this base. Cox, for example, defines modern man as a "pragmatic" man. He is a man concerned with the question, "Will it work?" He is not very concerned with mysteries and shows little enthusiasm for anything which resists "the application of human energy and intelligence." He views his world not as a unified metaphysical system but instead as a series of problems and projects.[12]

In a section of The Secular City entitled "John F. Kennedy and Pragmatism," Cox develops his definition of contemporary pragmatic man. This man disciplines himself to give up certain things. He approaches problems by isolating them from irrelevant considerations by bringing to bear the knowledge of different specialists:

> Life for him is a set of problems, not an unfathomable mystery. He brackets off the things that cannot be dealt with and deals with those that can. He wastes little time thinking about 'ultimate' or 'religious' questions. And he can live with highly provisional solutions.[13]

He feels no need to ask religious questions because he believes he can live in the world without them.

Cox concludes this section by stating that the fact that urban-secular man is incurably and irreversibly pragmatic and less and

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[12]Harvey Cox, The Secular City (New York: The Macmillan Company, 1965), p. 60.

[13]Ibid., p. 63.

less concerned with "religious" questions is "in no sense a disaster." This is merely an indication that he is finally shedding the lifeless cuticles of the mythical and ontological periods and stepping into the functional age. It is obvious that Cox sees this ideal picture of pragmatic man as man come of age, normative, and builds his theological program on this basis. This is not to say that Cox believes pragmatic man has mastered his existence. Indeed, in a skillful manner, Cox lays out problems facing man which will have to be confronted immediately if he is not to destroy himself. The point is rather that Cox has accepted pragmatic man as an ideal life style which each of us manifests with varying degrees of success and which presents us with a norm against which we can judge the effectiveness of our response to the environment.

One can understand why Cox comes down so strongly on the side of pragmatic man. For centuries, a large segment of the religious world has tended to remove itself from everyday realities and concentrate its thought and life on a "world beyond." Often it has concentrated on movement away from the imperfections of this world into the bliss of the next rather than on transformation of this world from what it is into what it ought to be. This "otherworldliness" will no longer satisfy the creative theological thinkers of our time. Standing in the debt of Jesus of Nazareth, who directed his concern to the alleviation of suffering for all of God's children, Christian theologians see their task as that of assisting men not so much to prepare for an after-life but to live abundantly in this life. As they look about them and see structures and systems which are inhibiting a full life for men, they are moved to action. And living in a pragmatic age, many such as Cox very naturally turn to pragmatism as

the mode of action. But although this is understandable both in the light of the history of one segment of the theological enterprise and the present cultural milieu and though it is much to be preferred over the "otherworldliness" against which it is reacting, it is in great danger of becoming a sell-out to a contemporary view of man which men like Lewis Mumford are finding totally inadequate. In other words, Cox and those who stand in this same theological stream, by reacting to the irrelevancy of much theological thought, are over-reacting. They are in serious danger of becoming merely reflectors of contemporary man's view of himself rather than critics.

It is at precisely this point where Mumford can be of immense significance. It is his contention that the fact that contemporary man is unconcerned with "mysteries," that he is not interested in raising religious questions, that he has ceased looking for unity are not positive developments, as Cox apparently believes, but are instead departures from man's true nature. Indeed, as we shall see in later chapters, Mumford believes that man's closing his psyche to these questions is at the heart of his present malaise. Mumford, to be sure, is critical of the religious tradition but, interestingly enough, his assessment of its positive contributions are precisely those which Cox seems most anxious to reject.

Religion, which Mumford defines as "the sphere beyond knowledge and certainty, where ultimate mystery adds a new dimension to meaning," has kept alive dimensions of man's personality which a utilitarian and pragmatic age tends to disregard. The raising of unanswerable questions is basic to human life. Therefore, to ignore those questions is

both to reduce the dimensions of what it means to be a man and to arrest man's further development. It would indeed be ironic if religion were to abandon its historic role by accommodating itself to the mind-set of a particular historical period precisely when counterbalancing emphases are sorely needed. Mumford's work can assist contemporary theologians to remain true to their own heritage.

A related issue in this regard is Mumford's concern for broad historical perspective in general. He is convinced that modern man has an a-historical bias. This is probably to be expected since the world is changing so rapidly that one has a difficult enough time remaining abreast of the present scene let alone the past which has helped form him. But though understandable, this a-historical bias is one of the most critical errors that one can make because it deprives man both of the wealth of experience which the past has to offer and other life styles against which he might compare his own. True education arises out of dialogue. If modern man ceases dialogue with his past, his education will surely be stunted.

Particular currents in contemporary theology are in danger of closing off conversation with the past. Disillusioned by the irrelevance to the present scene of so much previous theology, a further step is often taken which seems to say that the past itself is irrelevant. The present age in which man lives is seen as so radically discontinuous with the past that it must tear loose from all previous moorings. This tendency is particularly evident in the writings of Thomas J. J. Altizer who makes the statement in <u>The Gospel of Christian Atheism</u> that a fully

consistent Christianity "renounces all attachment to the past."[14] He continues by stating further that theology "must ever give itself to a negation of every past form of the word."[15] He contends that the Christian for whom Christ is to be truly present must adopt "the one principle" that "he can no longer be clearly or decisively manifest in any of his previous forms or images."[16] Finally, toward the end of the book, Altizer urges his readers to "speak against every previous epiphany of light."[17] Mumford is especially helpful as a corrective against such an a-historical bias. His manifestly historical orientation and the convincing manner in which he relates the present to conditions centuries in the making establish a balance between the continuous character of man's pilgrimmage and the admittedly revolutionary nature of the present. In this he can assist contemporary theology, and other disciplines as well, to overcome the a-historical thinking prevalent at the present time.

Still another area in which Mumford can be of aid to contemporary theology can be seen by comparing his assessment of man's place in the universe to that of Harvey Cox. Cox follows Albert Camus closely and states that the central question facing man today is: "What are the sources of meaning and value by which man lives his life? Are they created and imposed by God, or does man invent them himself?"[18] Cox appears to side with Camus and believes that man himself is the source of whatever significance the human enterprise holds. But, he continues, this

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[14]Thomas J. J. Altizer, The Gospel of Christian Atheism (Philadelphia: Westminster Press, 1966), p. 50.

[15]Ibid., p. 83.

[16]Ibid., p. 137.

[17]Ibid., p. 152.

[18]Cox, p. 72.

does not rob God of His place in the universe nor is His significance lessened. The problem roots in the fact that for centuries Christian theology has misinterpreted the Bible. Cox turns to the Jahvist account of creation to substantiate his claim. Here, he says, one can see that man has a substantial part to play in the creation of the world. For although man does not "form" the animals, he does "name" them and thus confers on them their meaning and significance. Further, naming and forming must not be too widely separated. God's activity itself is of both varieties, both forming and naming. The point is that God, after creating man, enlists him in His activity. The "world does not come to man already finished and ordered. It comes in part confused and formless and receives its significance from man."[19] In sum...

> God does not simply insert man into a world filled with creatures which are already named, in relationships and meaning patterns already established by decree. Man must fashion them himself. He doesn't simply discover meaning; he originates it.[20]

Cox believes that this understanding of Genesis has been missed by generations of Biblical scholars because they have been under the spell of Greek philosophy. Once freed from this dependency, Christians will see that in the Bible the creation is not completed by God until after man is formed and begins to work as God's partner in ordering the chaos. Therefore, creation is never actually complete. God and man are always fashioning new directions for the cosmos. When this perspective is understood men like Camus will no longer need "to choose between God and human freedom, between Christian faith and human creativity."[21] All this Mumford would find refreshing coming from a Christian theologian

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[19] Ibid., p. 74. [20] Ibid., p. 74. [21] Ibid., p. 77.

(actually, process theologians have been saying this for decades) and though he uses different language to express similar themes, as we shall see in a later chapter, his mature position is very similar to that which has thus far been expressed.

The point of difference arises when Cox, as he does in On Not Leaving It to the Snake, lays out his reasons for choosing what he calls the prophetic mood instead of the teleological perspective. Cox states in this book that for many modern secular people "some sort of teleological view of man and the cosmos has become a substitute for traditional religious belief."[22] He cites Loren Eisley's biological teleological thinking, Pierre Lecompte de Nuoy's position as stated in Human Destiny, and Teilhard de Chardin's so-called Christian teleology. He qualifies Teilhard's position, however, by stating that Teilhard's thought ripens into prophecy because he suggests that man holds the key to the next stage of the cosmic process.

One of the problems of teleology, according to Cox, is its hubris.

> Man experiences himself as a purposeful creature. Unable to believe that the vast cosmos around him is devoid of purpose, he projects onto it his own purposive style, and usually assigns himself a crucial place in the telos of the cosmos. Even secularized man has a vague sense that there must be some purposeful intelligence somewhere, that the appearance of a whole universe of such enormous complexity could hardly have happened by mere chance. This gnawing mixture of hubris and wishful thinking still persists even among people who have left conventional religion behind.[23]

Teleology, Cox continues, further suffers because it emphasizes the

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[22]Harvey Cox, "Tradition and the Future: II," Christianity and Crisis, Vol. XXVII (October 16, 1967), p. 228.

[23]Ibid., p. 228.

arche, the beginning, rather than the future. This means that development and necessity tend to replace radical freedom and responsibility. Thus, it obscures "man's special character as a historical creature, as an animal with memory and hope, who knows that if he destroys his world he can no longer blame it on forces beyond his control."[24]

The prophetic mood, on the other hand, Cox states, views the eschata (future) transforming the arche (past) rather than vice versa. "It sees the future with its manifold possibilities undoing the determinative grip of the past, of the beginning."[25] Therefore, the future will not be shaped by malevolent forces or irresistible inherent tendencies, but instead by what man decides to do. Further, the prophetic mood frees man from believing that he has "to build eternity or solve things once and for all." For though man can shape the future, since he is not God, he cannot bring history to a close. For prophecy, the Messiah is always the one who will come. "Man is not God. Since he cannot abolish his own freedom, he cannot terminate history."[26]

Mumford would take serious issue with Cox's analysis of the teleological view, seeing it both as overly generalized and as an oversimplification of a much more complex stance. Cox's charge that teleology leads to hubris is especially vulnerable. Mumford would claim that the attempt on the part of teleologists to find purpose inherent in the universe against which man moves at his peril leads not to hubris but instead to a humility before the created order. It would appear that the prophetic mood, at least as defined by Cox, is more in danger of hubris than teleology when it speaks of the radical openness of the future and

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[24] Ibid., p. 229. [25] Ibid., p. 230. [26] Ibid.

forgets that the very nature of man and the cosmos may well dictate a limited number of viable historical alternatives.

Mumford agrees with Cox by quoting Spinoza with approval that "nature has no fixed end in view" but continues by stating that "there is a great difference between having no fixed aim and having no aim at all. To say that one has laid out at the beginning no rigidly pre-ordained route is not the same as to say that one has no provisional destination."[27] He argues, as we shall see, that a detailed investigation of biological and sociological phenomena over the past several decades points to the purposive nature of all life. This does not mean, however, that man is thus devoid of any responsibility for helping shape the direction of history. Cox's error is his assumption that freedom is incompatible with cosmic purpose and that cosmic purpose implies a fixed and unchangable end in view.

To think teleologically is not to deny man the freedom to forge a better future. It is instead an attempt to place man's life in the context of a purposive cosmos into which he has been ushered and in which he will either transcend or destroy himself. N. J. Berrill, the biologist, speaks for Mumford when he says, "We do not walk upon alien earth. Something in the universe corresponds to human intelligence."[28] So does Philip R. Harris in The Changing Man:

> Yes, with the intensification of consciousness, man is becoming more aware of the forces of evolution and can decide to cooperate and influence them....Man is becoming sensitive to man, and in

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[27]Lewis Mumford, The Conduct of Life (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1951), p. 131.

[28]"Foreseeing the Unforeseeable," Kaiser Aluminum News, ed. Don Fabun, No. 6, (1966), p. 5.

turn, to the whole of creation and its very source....[29]

This rising awareness of man's place in a purposive cosmos does not lead to a kind of futuristic quietism because of a supposed replacement of the themes of radical freedom and responsibility with those of development and necessity, as Cox suggests, but instead to the assumption of responsibility necessary for human and social transformation.

Beyond the specific contributions to the current theological scene discussed above, Mumford's work is of broader significance to theology at a time when the theological enterprise is in greater ferment than it has been in many years.

Michael Novak has contended recently that increasingly the poles between which practically all recent theological discourse has been carried on both in this country and in Europe--the tension between the liberalism of Rudolf Bultmann and the neo-orthodoxy of Karl Barth--have become inadequate. In a statement entitled "The Inadequacy of German Categories," he states that the new context, at least for an American theologian, "is less and less the context of theological schools of thought; the context is that of the whole academic community...the wider public also becomes involved in the theological enterprise."[30]

Novak continues by stating that in this context the Germanic distinction between a "religionless Christianity" and "religion," so popular in current theological discourse, may not be applicable because it

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[29] Ibid.

[30] Michael Novak, "The New Relativism in American Theology," The Religious Situation: 1968, ed. Donald R. Cutler, (Boston: Beacon Press, 1968), p. 216.

does not take the secular saint, the humanistic atheist, into account. For though the social activist, the writer, the professor, and the laborer are more than likely not "religious," neither are they always "Christians," not even of the "religionless variety.

> In a perfectly good sense, in fact, without quotation marks, they may well be religious: ultimately concerned about human openness and human responsibility and moved by the vision of a city in which men are ends and never means. Thus their religion may seem wholely articulable in secular, historical terms.[31]

What fascinates Novak is that the particular kind of transcendence which is important to Judaism and to Christianity "is <u>also</u> wholely immanent and wholely articulable in secular, historical terms." He is interested in the relativity which links what he terms the heavily humanistic and trusting atheism current on the American scene with the theism of those who recognize God as a "kind of intelligent force of vitality in all things." He states that increasingly one encounters a sense of wisdom and modesty on both sides, "such that the profile of belief and action becomes increasingly identical."[32]

It should become clear in the succeeding chapters that, if one accepts Novak's contention that the territory between Barth and Bultmann is no longer large enough to contain the theological enterprise, the work of Lewis Mumford must be considered integral to the doing of theology. If to be "religious" is to be ultimately concerned about human openness and human responsibility and moved by the vision of a city in which men are ends and never means, Mumford is surely a religious man. Increasingly, his thought should be regarded as vitally important to an adequate theological understanding of the contemporary world. The

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[31] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 217.

[32] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 218.

Christian theologian cannot afford to neglect the insights which Mumford has contributed to an understanding of the human condition.

CHAPTER II

IN THE GRIP OF VALUELESS POWER

Mumford's analysis of man's present condition and his need for renewal ranks as one of the most perceptive commentaries on the contemporary scene. Many writers, Christian and non-Christian, have made the same general statements as he concerning the human condition. The strength of Mumford's analysis, however, and its uniqueness, is its concrete character. He does not merely state that contemporary man is a prideful creature bent on destroying himself but shows how this pride is manifested in varying social structures. He does not merely state that the unbalanced life is inimical to growth but demonstrates the results of such unbalance. It is this quality which one finds most convincing.

The reader will notice quickly the unqualified character of Mumford's analysis. He paints situations in broad strokes and with few modifications. This once prompted Mark Van Doren to say of him that "he too much suffers in the presence of error--which he defines in too strict terms." Van Doren continues by stating that though Mumford's ideas are brilliant, "history needs to be written with a rougher hand."[33] Again, Will Herberg once derisively said of him:

> Mr. Mumford is a yes-or-no, all-or-nothing man, who knows no qualifications or distinctions and has nothing but contempt for

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[33]Mark Van Doren, Review of The Golden Day, by Lewis Mumford, The Nation, CXIII (December 1, 1926), pp. 601-602.

the limitations reality places on the imagination.[34]

This is gross over-statement and probably reflects more on Herberg's style than Mumford's, but there is truth in it as there is truth in Van Doren's comments. However, the prophetic role, and Mumford is primarily a prophet, is that of moving beyond fine distinctions to root causes, to confront individuals and society with their malaise, and hopefully to move them in a new direction. This is Mumford's purpose for writing and on this ultimately he must be judged.

In this chapter I will exposit Mumford's analysis of man's present plight and comment critically upon it. Mumford looks to a cadre of renewed men and women, a "saving remnant," whom he hopes will bring about critically necessary renewal; but he fails, in my opinion, to present a program sufficient to develop the internal change needed in those who are to form this cadre. This criticism will be developed in the closing pages of this chapter by comparison of Mumford's doctrine of sin with that of Reinhold Niebuhr, with whom Mumford came into contact in the Nineteen Thirties.

Perhaps the best way to begin the analysis is to quote, as Mumford has done throughout his authorship, the words of Henry Adams, written in 1905:

> At the present rate of progression since 1600, it will not need another century to tip thought upside down. Law, in that case, would disappear as theory or absolute principle and give way to force. Morality would become police. Explosives would reach cosmic violence. Disintegration would overcome integration.[35]

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[34]Will Herberg, Review of In the Name of Sanity, by Lewis Mumford, The New Leader (October 11, 1954), p. 16.

[35]Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 392.

Mumford believes with increasing conviction that Henry Adams' words were prophetically accurate. Society was then and is continuing now to move downhill at an accelerating rate. Since there has been no fundamental personal and social renewal since Adams made his prediction, Mumford contends that, unless such change occurs very soon, civilization will have come to the end of its tether. In an essay entitled The Uprising of Caliban, Mumford chose a literary form typical of his style to personify the totality of the present dehumanizing forces in the figure of Caliban, "that fawning brute, that gibbering fool, that snarling animal" created by Shakespeare in The Tempest.[4] Caliban, he says, is the symbol of the primitive, unconscious forces inherent in man which, when uncontrolled by him, ultimately consume him. Mumford describes Caliban in a number of ways: as brute vitality and energy, undirected and self-destructive; as the id depicted in the writings of Sigmund Freud; or, as he says, to one who prefers the symbols of theology, the demonic. Mumford sees these disintegrating forces as dominating contemporary society and as growing rapidly in intensity. He contends that unless they are checked rapidly by Prospero, symbol of man's higher powers, man's life will have run its course.

Mumford continues his analysis by sharply differentiating the period immediately preceding the First World War and that which followed. For although the present crisis has been many centuries in the making, a crucial stage of it began approximately fifty years ago. Therefore, only those whose birth preceded the second decade of the Twentieth Century

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[36]Lewis Mumford, In the Name of Sanity (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1954), p. 167.

have the historical experience necessary to appreciate fully the hiatus between this last stage and that which preceded it. In this respect, Mumford obviously feels a peculiar responsibility to his society because he is one of the few remaining individuals who has both lived before the advent of the First World War and who possesses the critical insight necessary to contrast this period with that of the present. He states that anyone born on this side of World War One is prone to believe that the inordinate violence and irrationality of our present age have always characterized Western civilization. But nothing, he continues, could be further from the truth:

> Most of you cannot remember, as I do, the look of incredulous horror on everyone's face when they read the morning papers on a May day some thirty-nine years ago [this statement was given originally on May 3, 1954] and found that the steamer Lusitania, a ship loaded with a few hundred passengers, had been sunk without warning by a German submarine. The shock of that event went far deeper than the first Fascist bombing of civilians in Madrid during the Franco uprising against the constitutional Spanish republic; and that, in turn, was greater than the horror evoked by the wiping out by the Nazis of thirty thousand Dutch civilians in the center of Rotterdam. Again, that event seemed more dreadful, at least to Americans, than our own extermination of one hundred thousand civilians (along with fifty thousand soldiers) in Hiroshima, by our dropping of the first atomic bomb in 1945.[37]

This is a significant passage because Mumford uses it to illustrate that in the brief period between 1915 and 1945 violence and slaughter--the two most visible symptoms of decay--had increased at a geometric rate while simultaneously human reaction to this state of affairs had altered inversely. The period since has only intensified the sickness so that today, he claims, that which passes for normalcy is in fact a sickness foreign to any previous era.

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[37] Ibid., pp. 169-170.

While one can agree with Mumford that the past fifty years has probably known more slaughter and violence than any other period in the history of men, it is difficult to agree that human reaction to this state has altered inversely. Certainly, millions of individuals have become hardened to human suffering. It may even be that constant exposure to it by way of the mass media has contributed to this. But one could make a strong case that events of the past several years have shown a revulsion to man's inhumanity to man on the part of individuals, particularly among young people, unparalleled in the history of men. B. Davie Napier, Dean of the Chapel at Stanford University, is right when he says the following about a significant minority of America's current student generation:

> It is a student generation with a prophetic party--something new in the history of American higher education--which knows the futility and devastation of World War I, the continuing effects of depersonalization of World War II; which has some intelligent understanding of the potential carnage of World War III; and is trying to say, in still swelling chorus, 'In the name of Heaven, or in the name of humanity, in the name of the prophetic vision, in the name of God, Stop.'[38]

This statement could be buttressed by numerous others. The problem, it appears, is not so much that there is no human reaction to an approaching catastrophe; instead, it is that those who see this on the horizon have neither been able to agree on what kind of change is needed nor to marshall sufficient internal and external resources to prevent it.

Mumford feels that the first individuals to grasp the sad reality of the contemporary world, apart from a few isolated prophets, were a group of modern artists who, he says, transposed the sickness into es-

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[38]B. Davie Napier, "The University and the Prophetic Dream," Journal, Vol. VI, (November, 1967), p. 15.

thetic form. A prime example is Pablo Picasso, for in his "Guernica" we see the wounds and scars of our time revealed without even the faintest hint of a new integration. At times, Mumford states, as in the preliminary sketches for "Guernica," the emotion is so lacerating that the next step would be either insanity or suicide.[39] Or, he continues, one could point to Max Ernst's women with beards or dust brushes instead of faces, corpselike figures dissected by esthetic Bluebeards, or a host of others. In toto, Mumford concludes, the message which modern art brings us in its purest moments is violence and nihilism--the death of the human personality.

Despite the fact that decay is upon us, he continues, and that prophets such as Thoreau, Melville, Tolstoy, Ruskin, and Burckhardt in the Nineteenth Century and Schweitzer and Niebuhr in the Twentieth have attempted to wake the populace to it, with few exceptions those in positions of power as well as the man on the street continue to live without recognition that the very basis of contemporary civilization is rotting away.*[40] Clearly, Mumford states, this is the alternative to renewal--total catastrophe. All previous historical disintegrations, as catastrophic as they were, had one saving element: geographic limitation. When the past civilizations of Greece, Rome, China, or India collapsed, they were surrounded by neighbors who had reached nearly equal levels of culture, whereas if Western civilization continues on its present path

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[39]Lewis Mumford, Art and Technics (New York: Columbia University Press, 1960), p. 7.

[40]Ibid., pp. 142-143. *Mumford also points to Spengler who in his own disturbed manner turned out to be far wiser "than most of his more rational contemporaries, including myself, were willing at that time to grant."

it will spread ruin to every corner of the planet; and its going will consume the very forces and ideas within its own traditions which might have given its successor a new beginning. Martin Luther King, in dramatic prose, made a similar point when shortly before his death he stated, "...we are increasingly aware that we had better soon learn to live together as brothers or we will all perish together as fools."[41]

Mumford contends that the one overriding reason for this critical state is quite clear: Our value system is in a state of utter disorder because basic religious and moral values have been allowed to lapse, and elements in man's personality basic to human life have been neglected in the pursuit of misdirected and uncontrolled power. We have neglected the proper education of man by forgetting in our pride that uncontrolled power, however manifested, is inimical to life. Life flourishes only to the extent that it is able, under the guidance of an hierarchical value system, to "regulate power, screening off its direct impact and reducing it to those amounts that are favorable to vital processes."[42] When this is not done, life moves in the direction of disintegration, man's present state. The irony of our present situation, he continues, is that those who laid the foundations for this era initially turned their backs upon historic values quite consciously for they were anxious to make precedents, not follow them.

To place the issue in philosophic terminology, our world is

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[41]Martin Luther King, Jr., "A New Heaven and a New Earth," Journal, Vol. VI, (January, 1968), p. 2.

[42]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 13.

a product of Nineteenth Century rationalism, utilitarianism, and scientific positivism. The dominating principles of this ideology were objectivity and causality; only that aspect of human experience verifiable either by experiment or strictly controlled induction and deduction were regarded as real. Subjectivity and teleology were rejected: "Whatever was self-developed, inwardly conditioned, nonrepeatable, unique or purposeful was excluded as unreal."[43]

New World culture meant organization and control applied to every manifestation of life. Our New World forebearers confidently expected that developing science and technics would make unnecessary and thus displace previous forms of art, thought, and practice. As a matter of fact, the continuing persistence of these older forms among certain peoples and in particular regions would have surprised them as much as it disturbs their contemporary disciples. But what the new utilitarians unfortunately never realized was that the moral and intellectual traditions of Judaea, Greece, and Rome which they turned their backs upon were essential to an adequate fulfillment even of their own utilitarian goals. Only now, as these older traditions crumble at an accelerating rate, is the insufficiency of this ideology being exposed. A view that disclaims all interest in human values except the increase of manipulative skill and power ultimately turns upon itself, leading "to a contempt for science and a deliberate perversion of its results."[44]

In comparing the actions of Leonardo Da Vinci with those of many contemporary scientists, Mumford gives the reader a clear insight

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[43]Mumford, The Transformations of Man, p. 96.

[44]Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 391.

into his position. He contends that scholars, in doing justice to Leonardo, the inventor and engineer, have tended to neglect the fact that Leonardo was disturbed by his mechanical projections. Not only had he foreseen that "men shall walk without moving, they shall speak with those absent, they shall hear those who do not speak." He also foresaw, in a fantasy written in letter form, the possibility of a hideous monster which would attack and destroy mankind. For though Leonardo gave the monster a tangible, gigantic, subhuman form, his acts correspond all too closely with the hideous scientifically engineered exterminations of our own age. The monster's invulnerability to attack reinforces the resemblance to the atomic, bacterial, and chemical weapons which now threaten man's destruction. Mumford quotes at length from Leonardo's Notebooks:

> Alas, how many attacks were made upon this raging fiend; to him every onslaught was as nothing. O wretched folk, for you there availed not the impregnable fortresses, not the lofty walls of your cities, not the being together in great numbers, not your houses or palaces!...Oh, how many wretched mothers and fathers were deprived of their children! How many unhappy women were deprived of their companions. In truth, my dear Benedette, I do not believe that ever since the world was created there has been witnessed such lamentation and wailing of people, accompanied by so great terror. In truth the human species in such plight has need to envy every other race of creatures...for us wretched mortals there avails not any flight, since this monster when advancing slowly far exceeds the speed of the swiftest courser.[45]

He acknowledges that there is no way of proving that this nightmarish picture was the reverse side of Leonardo's more widely recognized hopeful anticipations of the future. But those who have lived the past fifty years know, he says, even better than Leonardo, in the face of both heightened triumphs of human power and the degradations of human perver-

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[45]Lewis Mumford, The Myth of the Machine (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1967), p. 288.

sity, by what a large factor his anticipated evils have been multiplied.

In one sense, of course, Leonardo was no different from many of our best contemporary scientists and technicians. His scientific talents, as are theirs, were at war with his conscience. History reminds us that he sold his services to the Duke of Milan in the same way that German scientists in the Thirties sold their services to Hitler and many present-day American scientists sell their services to the present administration. But in another sense he was very different in that he lived in an age whose value structure supported the claims of dimensions of one's personality other than those of pure intelligence in the support of power. Our age does not. Therefore, he deliberately suppressed his invention of the submarine "on account of the evil nature of man, who would practice assassination at the bottom of the sea." This suppression indicates to Mumford a moral sensitiveness equal to his inventive capacities, a quality which Mumford contends one rarely finds today. He concludes his discussion of Leonardo by stating that only a handful of scientists in our day, of whom the late Nobert Wiener and Leo Szilard are two outstanding examples, have demonstrated a parallel concern and self-control.[46]

Norbert Wiener, to whom Mumford refers, uses the terms "know-how" and "know-what" to speak to this issue which Mumford is addressing. He contends, as does Mumford, that modern man, especially the modern American, has a great deal of "know-how" but very little "know-what." "He will accept the superior dexterity of the machine-made decisions without too much inquiry as to the motives and principles behind

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[46] Ibid., pp. 287-294.

these."[47] Wiener warns us that we are placing ourselves in a dangerous position if we let a machine (whether mechanical or bureaucratic) decide our conduct without our first determining if its principles are acceptable to us. Wiener's term "know-what" corresponds to Mumford's term "value," and he is as concerned as Mumford that our overly pragmatic society is existing increasingly in a value vacuum. He states, "The hour is very late, and the choice of good and evil knocks at our door."[48]

Again, C. R. De Carlo, in a perceptive essay entitled "Educational Technology and Value Systems," raises this same issue by asking: "How do we reduce the 'independence' of technique?" Dr. De Carlo asserts the necessity of placing the technical act within what he calls the fabric of "the larger and more humane institutions." Yet the danger in a technical age is that "to the extent that an institutional form integrates technique into its fabric it begins to suffer the dangers of deepening the dualism between spirit and matter, form and content, ends and means."[49] It is Mumford's contention that not only is this a danger but an unfortunate historical actuality which needs rapid reversal if the society is to survive.

The theme of a value vacuum and the rise of naked power runs throughout the entire corpus of Mumford's authorship. In The Story of Utopias, written in more hopeful days, the variant on this theme is that

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[47]Norbert Wiener, The Human Use of Human Beings (Garden City, New York: Doubleday Anchor Books, 1954), pp. 184-185.

[48]Ibid., p. 186.

[49]C. R. De Carlo, "Educational Technology and Value Systems," Dialogue on Technology (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1967), pp. 71-72.

of using scientific development for essential community needs; or, as he states, science, a powerful potential instrument for good, needs to be humanized. But in order for this to occur, a "hierarchy of values" needs to be established, one which bears a clear relationship to human needs. Increasingly, recognition must be given to the fact that there are significant "truths" and trivial ones, innocent "truths" and dangerous ones, and that in particular times investigations into particular areas of knowledge may need to be neglected in order that other areas of knowledge may be pursued.[50] When Seymour Melman in Our Depleted Society calls for a hierarchy of societal priorities, he is repeating the challenge made by Lewis Mumford over forty years ago.

In Herman Melville, the same theme shifts from a social dimension to a more personal one. Moby Dick, the great whale, represents at least on one level "the brute energies of existence, blind, fatal, overpowering, while Ahab is the spirit of man, small and feeble, but purposeful, that pits its puniness against this might, and its purpose against the blank senselessness of power."[51] Ahab's intent is heroic but his error lies in the fact that he attempted to defeat Moby Dick by physical combat. The proper means by which man displaces accident, however, is not to become more powerful but to become more human. This is the way of growth and it is precisely all the things that Ahab despises when he is about to attack the whale. Pip's love and his loyalty, his memory of his family, the sextant of science, the inner sense of calm

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[50]Lewis Mumford, The Story of Utopias (New York: Viking Press, 1962), pp. 274-277.

[51]Lewis Mumford, Herman Melville (New York: The Literary Guild of America, 1929), p. 184.

which makes all external struggle futile--these are the very things by which he would be both redeemed and victorious.

In Faith for Living, written in the lengthening shadows of the Second World War, Mumford interpreted the chaotic state of the Thirties as the result of "a curious upset of values." In his words, the cart has been placed before the horse, for in man's continuing striving for mechanical efficiency and power the very top-soil of civilization--moral order--has been eroded. And lacking moral order nothing else is significant:

> Material organization, then, is no substitute for moral order. The final test of an economic system is not the tons of iron, the tanks of oil, or the miles of textiles it produces; the final test lies in its ultimate products--the sort of men and women it nurtures, and the order and beauty and sanity of their communities. Divorced from a system of moral and esthetic values, the most powerful industrial organization or political state completely lacks human validity.[52]

The above three examples are merely illustrative of Mumford's basic stance: If power in any of its manifestations is to be creative it must be balanced by other considerations and placed in the service of prior values.

One would think that in a crisis of the dimensions we have been describing men would recognize the seriousness of the situation and act in concert to bring about change. This, however, Mumford states, is not the case. Modern man is so intoxicated with his own prowess that he has convinced himself that he can do no wrong. He is the victim of his own insolence, for his over-confidence in the power of intellect results in a failure to reckon with his own creatureliness. No longer able to

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[52]Lewis Mumford, Faith for Living (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1940), p. 146.

distinguish between good and evil, incapable of taking moral responsibility, unwilling to accept blame for his acts, and confusing goodness with power and evil with impotence, modern man has undermined all his solid foundations. His underlying conviction that "modern man can do no wrong" is "the ethical source of his brutalities, his destructions, his self-contempt, his ultimate suicide."[53]

It is just this conviction that Mumford is convinced needs to be challenged: Modern man can and is doing great wrong. In Christian categories he is both capable of sin and the perpetrator of sin. Mumford's position is clearly outlined in his reply to the Behavior Research Project, a project organized in the Nineteen Forties in the state of Texas to analyse the causes of the domestic and international tensions of that time. The Project's working assumption was that the root of evil was fear. Thus, the task of the Project, as seen by the participants, was to root out the causes of fears, ease them, and thus triumph over evil. Mumford's answer to the Project participants was to question their entire set of presuppositions. He challenged their lack of historical perspective and reminded them that both Greek and Christian cultures, with a far deeper insight into the roots of evil than modern psychiatry, have attributed the chief source of sin not to fear but to pride and self-love. Sin is real and until men are willing to face this reality, renewal cannot take place. By tying evil exclusively to fear, the Project participants were merely reinforcing a characteristic tendency of our culture--that of blame avoidance.

The way one neutralizes evil tendencies, he continues, is not

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[53]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, pp. 148-151.

to deny the objective existence of evil nor to avoid blaming the blameworthy. Rather, it is to accept the fact that each of us has in our own conduct the very tendencies we dislike and see so clearly in those who oppose us; and without denying our responsibility to correct acts in others that need correction, to call upon others in turn to help correct them in us.

In sum:

> Let us grant that some forms of evil must be treated as a remediable disease, as Samuel Butler first satirically suggested in Erewhon. But if all evils were of a purely neurotic origin, the psychotic's gifts for murder or torture would be undistinguishable from acts of love since they leave him with no sense of guilt or remorse. That is the reductio ad absurduum of your attempt to reduce evil to fear and to banish blame and guilt: goodness, on those terms would merely be a name covering large areas of unacknowledged evil.[54]

The above statements point to Mumford's mature thinking on the nature of evil. The fact that all of his writings since the late Thirties reflect this position is the result of a fascinating sequence of events, one which needs to be outlined briefly because of its continuing influence on his thought. There were three basic factors involved in this sequence: the Fascist crisis in the Nineteen Thirties and early Forties; the inability of the so-called pragmatic liberals to come to terms with this crisis; and Mumford's introduction during this time to the writings and political stance of Reinhold Niebuhr. In the spring of 1938, Mumford published in The New Republic an article entitled "Call to Arms" in which he called for immediate national action against Fascist barbarism. In this article he contended that the most serious mistake one could make at that time was to assume that the fundamental values of

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[54] Ibid., p. 160.

life had not been altered in the Fascist countries. Therefore, compromise with Fascism was not possible. Indeed, Fascism's ultimate strength lay not in the superiority of its arms or its military leadership but in its capacity to demoralize those who were seeking to find common ground with it. He concluded with a ringing call to an active policy against Fascism. Specifically, at this point, he was calling for a suspension of commercial and political affairs with the Fascist states. Hopefully, such an approach would avert war, but if war had to come, it was far more desirable than the potential disintegration of Western civilization.[55]

The response of The New Republic's editors, in the same issue, was very critical. They contended that the issue was not so clear-cut as Mumford had drawn it; and that if one assessed the historical milieu in which Fascism was set, he would be less apt to respond in hysterical fashion. The basic problem was not, they continued, the pathological nature of Fascism but instead the economic and social weakness of Europe, democracy's failure to solve its own problems, the bitter domestic resistance to socialism, and the prejudices of race and religion. The course which America should follow was that of paying far more attention to the evils inherent in its own common life rather than the negligible danger from external violence. "For the forces of evil are not localized in Berlin or Rome. They are here as well--they lie potentially even within the most bitter anti-Fascist individuals."[56] The editors concluded that Mr. Mumford's action proposals were impractical, his fears

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[55]Lewis Mumford, "Call to Arms," The New Republic, Vol. LXXXXV, (May 18, 1938), pp. 39-42.

[56]Editorial, The New Republic, Vol. LXXXXV, (May 18, 1938), p. 32.

of Fascist conquest unfounded, and his tone dangerous because of "the war-like spirit which he invokes."[57] This response of his friends on The New Republic and other pragmatic liberals convinced Mumford that the liberal lacked an adequate doctrine of man, a failure "to recognize evil as evil."[58] The liberals, under the spell of a historical determinism, asked, "Was not Germany the victim of Versailles?" "Was not Italy humiliated by her virtual defeat and her incompetence?" and in so doing confused causes with circumstances. They paid undue attention to the effect of external situations while seriously understating the part played by ideas, projects, fantasies, and the concentrated will of men. While no one doubted that the misery and demoralization following upon the iniquitous Treaty of Versailles provided a soil in which Fascism could sprout, to use this soil as the major cause for Fascism was to seriously misread both man's nature and his history. This being the case, where was one to look for a stance equal to the demand of the hour?

It is at this point that Reinhold Niebuhr came to Mumford's aid because in Niebuhr's active resistance to the Fascist menace at a time when such resistance was unpopular and his basing his resistance to a great degree on a doctrine of radical evil, Mumford witnessed a combination of life and thought adequate to meet the Fascist crisis. He interpreted Niebuhr as claiming, on the basis of the Christian faith, that the capacity to sin, or rather the inevitableness of sin, is a constant fact

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[57] Ibid.

[58] Mumford, Faith for Living, p. 79. *In June, 1940, Mumford resigned as contributing editor of The New Republic, a post he had held for thirteen years. In the fall of 1939 he had resigned as vice-chairman of the American Artists' Congress in protest of the Congress' defense of the Hitler-Stalin compact.

of human experience. "Not just a breaking of rules and laws; but a defiance of that which the sinner himself knows to be best--that is the nature of sin."[59] It is on this basis that the Fascists must ultimately be judged, as sinners who individually and collectively were violating the foundations of civilized life. "In short: we are faced not merely with evil conditions: we are faced with the doctrines and the works of evil men."[60] If civilization were to endure in the face of such evil, Fascism had to be resisted with all the strength one could muster. It was not difficult for Mumford to extend this analysis of man's plight from the specifics of the Fascist challenge to broader areas of personal and social life. The sickness of our society is not the result of forces beyond our control. It is the result of the evil and misguided actions of men and will be corrected only when men confess their sin and take upon themselves personally the burden of correcting it. As we shall see in the concluding pages of this chapter, however, this is precisely what men, unaided, seem unable to do. It is Mumford's inability to recognize this reality which weakens his program of renewal. A more inclusive appropriation of Niebuhr's doctrine of man would have proved more adequate.

Men who are intoxicated by power tend quite obviously to build social structures which reflect this intoxication, or as Mumford stated years ago in The Golden Day, "every institution is the lengthened

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[59] Ibid.

[60] Lewis Mumford, Men Must Act (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1939), p. 63.

shadow of a man."[61] He delineates three such shadows as manifesting most clearly the insanity of our society: (1) the implications of our economic system; (2) an inclination to replace "the ancient art of warfare with the general practice of random and unrestricted extermination";[62] and (3) the increased altering of the face of the earth through an advancing technology. Each of these has already been alluded to in the preceding pages of this chapter, but they need now to be considered more systematically in order to see how Mumford views each as reflecting in its own particular way the underlying problem of our time.

In the "pecuniary economy" which developed over the last five hundred years, he claims, there was but one criterion of effort: profit. Therefore, if more profit could be obtained by baking stones than by baking bread, stones would be baked, even though people might be starving. Scarcity and surplus, demand and supply, had reality not in relation to man's wants or needs but in relation to the market. This being the case, unless these needs were met by means of an institutional life brought over from an earlier time, they remained unmet. "Money was the symbol of power, and power was the chief end of man."[63]

Under such economy, wants that can be expressed in terms of market demand continued to expand. Historically, this was marked first by an increase in the variety of goods offered; and second, by an increase in the amount created by a developing mechanization. In order to

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[61]Lewis Mumford, The Golden Day (Boston: Beacon Press, 1957), p. 42.

[62]Lewis Mumford, "The Art of the Impossible," Alternatives to the H-Bomb (Boston: Beacon Press), p. 15.

[63]Mumford, The Human Prospect, p. 288.

keep the economy going, it was necessary to increase wants, for only in this way could production be geared higher and profits increased. For if the market were saturated, with new production limited to legitimate replacements, opportunities for profit would decrease and undermine the existence of the overexpanded plant. In terms of the profit motive, stability meant frustration, and contraction meant bankruptcy. Although modifications have been made in this capitalist system, its essential thrust remains the same. Indeed, because of a number of historical factors--the expansion of the machine and a loss on the part of man of any sense of limits are two major ones--the last few decades have seen this system expand beyond all expectations.

The economy of a sane society would be based on an economy of need. Instead, under our current system we are operating increasingly under the dogma of increasing wants, a dogma succintly stated years ago by the Hoover Committee's report on Recent Economic Changes in the United States. The report stated as its operating principle:

> The survey has proved conclusively, what has long been held theoretically to be true, that wants are almost insatiable; that one want makes way for another. The conclusion is that economically we have a boundless field before us; that there are new wants which will make way endlessly for newer wants, as fast as they are satisfied.[64]

The period since this statement has borne out the malicious truth inherent in it. Stimulated by sophisticated advertising techniques, wants unknown at the time the statement was made are now built into the social fabric, so that a major airline can boast that it has spent forty million dollars to assure its passengers a choice of steak or roast at the very

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[64]Lewis Mumford, Technics and Civilization (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1934), p. 393.

moment that Congress is cutting back appropriations to arrest the decay of our cities. Or, again, one thinks of the recent decision of the Hudson River Commission to approve construction of the proposed expressway along the east bank of the Hudson River between Tarrytown and Ossining, New York. In its report the Commission minimized the danger to the beauty of the Tappan Zee and Hudson Highlands by the construction of a four- to six-lane expressway although a task force of the United States Department of the Interior regarded the threat serious enough to not recommend its construction. The statement on which the Commission based its decision is a classic example of the distorted values implicit in our economic structure. The Commission found that the expressway....

> Will not have an unreasonably adverse effect upon the scenic, historic, recreational and natural resources of the valley, when compared with its profoundly positive commercial, industrial and residential benefits.[65]

These examples merely illustrate the vicious paradox of the current economic system, for although based on a doctrine of expanding wants and an expanding body of consumers, it has continually fallen short of supplying man's basic needs. Ironically, few seem to realize this. One who does is Leon H. Keyserling, who, in an essay entitled, "Programs: Present and Future," recently stated the following: "We have scores of billions of dollars of absolutely wasteful and superfluous, if not pernicious, consumption in the economy and the productive facilities that feed it." What we do not have, however, is a set of priorities by which basic personal and social needs can be met and overcome. "Why," Dr. Keyserling asks, "cut back the war against poverty? Why not cut back expenditures

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[65] The New York Times, July 17, 1968, Editorial page.

which are less productive or even harmful in a social sense?"[66]

In Technics and Civilization, Mumford contrasts "wants" as implied in the Hoover Committee Report with what he entitles "vital wants." An essential character of vital wants is that they are all necessarily limited. For in the same way that the organism itself does not continue to grow beyond the norm of its species, so neither can any particular function of life be satisfied by limitless indulgence. Therefore, an economic system which takes human life seriously must take this quality of the person into account. Mumford reminds us that a harem of a thousand wives may satisfy the vanity of an oriental monarch; but what monarch is sufficiently well endowed by nature to satisfy the harem?

Further, a second quality of vital wants is that they cannot be restricted to those items which can be fabricated into machine goods and sold at a profit. Mumford quotes J. A. Hobson to the effect that if undue attention is given to such products, higher forms of work and life will be neglected. Or, as Mumford states when speaking of the dilemma in which Herman Melville found himself, one is always in danger, when concerned with the business of making a living, of losing all the other things that make life joyful and significant.[67] Song, story, music, painting, carving, idle play, drama are not things to be included after the belly is satisfied. Rather, "they must be included in human existence even to satisfy the belly, to say nothing of the emotional and in-

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[66]Leon Keyserling, "Programs: Present and Future," Dialogue on Poverty (New York: The Bobbs-Merrill Company, Inc., 1967), p. 103.

[67]Mumford, Herman Melville, p. 26.

tellectual and imaginative needs of man."[68]

If a society were geared to a value system directed toward the development of man's potentialities, it would take these vital wants seriously and structure its economic system to provide for them. However, the society in which we live, under the aegis of power, refuses to do this. Vital personal needs continue to be neglected, trivialities become increasingly common place, and urgent social needs go unmet.

It is important to emphasize that despite his strictures against the prevailing capitalist economic system, Mumford contends that the root problem is not the system but men who live under it. He appears to believe that as now structured in the United States, the system could be made flexible enough to meet man's needs. What is lacking is potency of will. In an article written in 1948 on United States-Soviet relations he contrasts briefly the Soviet economic system with that of the United States. He states that the United States should oppose the monolithic economic system of the Russians with "the actual pluralistic system" under which our country operates and not with "a fictitious version of our own economy in an equally monolithic form."[69] For it is the pluralistic system operative in our country which allows the greatest variety and play to whatever economic forces and institutions, private or public, will efficiently further the common good. We merely stultify ourselves and reduce our influence abroad by pretending we are governed only by the belief in private profit when, in fact, free public education is more characteristic of our society than private, and the TVA is as

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[68]Mumford, Technics and Civilization, p. 395.

[69]Mumford, In the Name of Sanity, p. 79.

much a part of the American economy as DuPont or General Motors. The world demands of us a dynamic contribution to humanity's welfare based on this pluralism and we serve no good purpose by identifying "our international policy with the forces of monopolistic capitalism at home and reactionary class interests abroad."[70]

This cautious endorsement of the possibilities of the American system and his disillusionment with the Soviet system contrast with his views expressed in the Twenties and Thirties in the heady days of Soviet Communism's youth and the rampant irresponsibility of American capitalism. It also reflects an increasing distrust with systems as such, as reflected in an important section in The Human Prospect entitled "The Triumph Over Systems." It is precisely the impurity of contemporary capitalism which has saved it from violent overthrow. The absorption of socialism into capitalism's ethos by way of public enterprises and social security has given it increasing balance and stability. On the other hand, it is the relative "purity" of the Soviet Regime which serves to buttress its inhumanity.[71]

To appreciate the shift in Mumford's position on this point, one should compare the section in The Human Prospect with one in Technics and Civilization entitled "Basic Communism," in which he is thinking systematically and argues for stringent state control. He is now convinced that any system in the hands of unregenerate men is corruptible and, conversely, regenerate men can use the varying insights of numerous systems to promote a better life. "The skepticism of systems is a basic

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[70] Ibid., p. 80.

[71] Mumford, The Human Prospect, pp. 315, 316.

thesis of this book; but it has another name: the affirmation of organic life."[72] What Mumford is saying essentially is that so long as men continue to look to particular social structures for the answer to man's state, they will miss the root issue: what it means to be a man. One's vision needs to be directed primarily, though not exclusively, to a vision of what human life should be, not to systems. Social structures necessary to support this vision can then be built accordingly. In a sense, Mumford is stating that our so-called political realists have turned our eyes from persons to structures. They are asking us to adjust persons to structures rather than structures to persons. Mumford wants us to turn our eyes to persons and their potentialities and to demand that structures conform to personal needs. It is this quest which increasingly has led him to anthropology, as his most recent books indicate, in an effort to discover what it means to be a man and, as was stated in the introductory chapter, it is the brilliance of this quest which constitutes his importance for mid-Twentieth Century man.

The Atom Bomb symbolizes for Mumford another reflection of the sickness of our society. By means of the bomb, modern man has "replaced the ancient art of warfare with the general practice of random and unrestricted extermination." In an article written in 1948 in which he commented on the Cold War and proposed how tensions might be reduced, Mumford suggested that with the invention of the Atom Bomb, the united States stepped into a role in the international scene similar to that of Eugene O'Neill's Emporer Jones. That is, the United States, harboring

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[72] Ibid., p. 319.

the delusion that the possession of the Atom Bomb made us invulnerable, stumbled into the post-war world until at length all sense of perspective was lost. As international tensions increased, menacing spectors and fears arose in our minds,"making ever louder the ominous beat of the distant Russian war drums." Finally, we concluded that the only effective answer to our fears was the magic of the silver bullet--the Atom Bomb.

> Perhaps the figure would be a little more accurate if one said that we have a whole cartridge belt of silver bullets; but, like so many of the magic gifts in ancient fairy stories, there is an unexpected penalty attached to their use: the result of using all of them may be to wipe out our friends and allies--to say nothing of ourselves--as well as our enemy. In O'Neill's play, you will remember, silver bullets killed the Emporer Jones. They were fired by savages who had copied his magic.[73]

The Atom Bomb, however, Mumford claims, is but the concrete manifestation of a deep-rooted nihilistic impulse in our society, a nihilism which for the first time in history tends to equate war with genocide. Such nihilism destroys the very principle of restraint so that in the Second World War so-called civilized men practiced genocide to a practically unlimited degree. This was true for the democratic powers as well as the Fascist powers in that the former merely perfected methods employed by the latter.

Hypocritically, he continues, we call such genocide by a false name: total war. As first propounded by the Italian General Douhet, the purpose of "total war" is that of maximum use of one's power to bring about the highest possible effectiveness at the smallest possible risk, not primarily by engaging the enemies' armies but by terrorizing and exterminating the civilian population. When this method was

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[73]Mumford, "The Art of the Impossible," in Alternatives to the H-Bomb, pp. 12-13.

first employed by the Fascist powers during the early days of World War II--witness the bombings of Madrid, Warsaw, London, Rotterdam, Coventry--the reaction of Americans was shock and unbelief. But within a matter of but a few years the Allies were using the same approach, the only difference being the fantastic increase in scale--witness the fire bombings in Tokyo and finally the dropping of the Atom Bomb on Nagasaki and Hiroshima. The extraordinary fact about the present post-war period is that mass extermination has awakened so little moral protest.[74]

In reflecting on the reasons behind such nihilism in The Transformations of Man, written a few years after the essay alluded to above, Mumford raised the rhetorical question: "Is it an accident indeed that all the triumphs that point to the emergence of post-historic man are triumphs of death?" He contended that the will to deny the possibilities of life and its development dominates modern life and thought. In an atmosphere dominated by the death wish, collective genocide, unformulated and implicit, though not always concealed, becomes the predominate social goal. This process began innocently enough by eliminating human impulses from science. It will reach its terminus by the elimination of human nature itself from the whole world of reality.[75]

Mumford's contention received frightening support from the recent publication, Report from Iron Mountain on the Possibility and Desirability of Peace, with introductory material by Leonard C. Lewin. According to Mr. Lewin, in August of 1963 a Special Study Group was secretly set up, under government auspices, to: (1) determine what problems the

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[74]Ibid., pp. 12-17.

[75]Mumford, The Transformations of Man, pp. 124-125.

United States would face if permanent peace broke out, and (2) to draw up a program to deal with these problems. The Study Group's sponsor was probably an ad hoc Governmental Committee at, or close to, Cabinet level. The group of fifteen included an economist, a sociologist, a cultural anthropologist, a psychologist, a psychiatrist, and a literary critic. It met once a month, usually for a period of two days, for two and a half years, the first and final meetings being held in an underground nuclear shelter inside Iron Mountain, in upstate New York. After unanimous agreement, the members submitted a report to the Government "interagency committee," along with an urgent recommendation that its contents be kept secret.

However, in the winter of 1966 a member of the Study Group gave a copy of the report to Leonard Lewin because, as he stated, while he accepted all the Report's conclusions, he believed that the findings should be made public. Lewin quickly found a publisher, Dial Press, wrote an introduction, included an interview with John Doe, and refused to say anything further about the report's origins.

The report states:

> It is uncertain, at this time, whether peace will ever be possible. It is far more questionable, by the objective standard of continued social survival rather than that of emotional pacifism, that it would be desirable even if it were demonstrably attainable.[75]

In other words, peace is hell. War is the stabilizing element in a society; it is "the basic social system, within which other secondary modes

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[75] Report from Iron Mountain on the Possibility and Desirability of Peace, with introductory material by Leonard C. Lewin, (New York: The Dial Press, 1967), as quoted in Transaction, Vol. V, (January/February, 1968), p. 7.

of social organization conflict or conspire."[76] The Report then proceeds to outline the functions which war serves--economically, politically, sociologically, and ecologically. Economic: "It is, and has been, the essential economic stabilizer of modern societies...." Political: It is only because of the threat of war that individual nations, and stable governments, can exist. "...'war' is virtually synonymous with nationhood." Sociological: "Allegiance requires a cause; a cause requires an enemy." Ecological: Here, war has a drawback since nuclear war, for example, kills off superior as well as inferior individuals. A possible substitute and improvement would be "...a universal requirement that procreation be limited to the products of artificial insemination," accompanied by "a comprehensive program of applied eugenics."[77]

The editors of Transaction magazine, commenting on the book, suggest that all available evidence indicates it is a hoax, but add quickly that it "is far from being 'just a hoax'...and it cannot be dismissed out of hand."[78] It is an acutely accurate satire. The following statement by John Doe is strikingly similar to any number of statements by Mumford:

> ...What they wanted from us was a different kind of thinking. It was a matter of approach. Herman Kahn calls it 'byzantine'--no agonizing over cultural and religious values.[79]

Transaction contends, and Mumford would probably agree, that the Report could have been compiled entirely from authentic sources. There are many social scientists performing this kind of investigation and many members of the Defense Department who think in so-called "byzantine" fashion.

In a survey of readers of the book, Transaction found that

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[76] Ibid. [77] Ibid., p. 8. [78] Ibid. [79] Ibid.

it was often government officials who took the book seriously. One Defense Department informant admitted that some of his colleagues agreed with the Report's conclusion that the Vietnam War is sound because at least it helps preserve stability at home. Another informant, involved with strategic planning in the Pentagon, asserted after reading the Report that he saw no reason to consider it a hoax since he often comes upon reports that read much the same way. And a third person--"a recent alumnus of the defense Establishment"--found the Report quite credible.[80] In the light of such reactions, Mumford's thesis that our society may be in the grip of a death wish is very credible. One is forced to ask to what extent a belief in the desirability and inevitability of war is built into the operational conceptions of the United States government. But more basic is this question: To what extent has this belief permeated the psyche of contemporary man? At a time in human history when men do have the capabilities of destroying themselves, this question assumes apocalyptic proportions.

The third shadow of our power-driven society, Mumford states, and one which influences and is influenced by the previous two, is man's worship of the machine. In its dual role as visible universal instrument and invisible object of collective worship, the machine is increasingly regarded by man as utopia. The increasing enlargement of its province has become the final end of life. Seduced by power, man naturally turns to the development of those instruments which will extend this power to

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[80] *Ibid.*

its utmost degree.[81]

The roots of this condition Mumford finds in the reaction of New World dynamism to the static quality of Old World thought and practice. And the reaction was a necessary one. Many genuine improvements in science and technics have resulted from it. For the first time in history, worldwide communication is an actuality; our technics have laid the foundations for a world in which hunger can be abolished; physical disease is being eradicated; all these are accomplishments conceived by only the most prescient minds but a few years ago. Yet, because technics has not been placed in the service of the fuller development of the person, its promise has turned into threat and its accomplishments are now in the service of disintegration.

Siegfried Giedion in Mechanization Takes Command makes precisely the same point. Mechanization, he claims, which promised so much, has been instead misused to exploit both earth and man with complete irresponsibility. This, he continues, is the outcome of a mechanistic conception of the world and will cease only when men look beyond merely materialistic and mechanistic conceptions and begin again on the basis of new insights into the nature of matter and organisms.[82]

Until a generation ago it was possible to think of the various components of technology as additive. Each new invention could be judged separately on its own performance, "estimated eventually in terms of the human good accomplished, and diminished or eliminated if it did

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[81]Lewis Mumford, "Utopia, The City and the Machine," Daedalus, Vol. XCIV, (Spring, 1965), p. 290.

[82]Siegfried Giedion, Mechanism Takes Command (New York: Oxford Press, 1948), pp. 714-723.

not in fact promote human welfare."[83] Mumford is convinced that this belief has proved to be an illusion. For though each new invention or discovery may respond to some general human need, or even spark a fresh human potentiality, it immediately becomes part of an authoritarian system which, on its own premises, has turned the machine into a god whose power must be increased, whose prosperity is essential to all existence, and whose operations, however irrational or compulsive, cannot be challenged or modified.

Allan Temko, an architectural critic, recently criticized Mumford for recognizing only the negative aspects of technological change and ignoring technology's positive contributions. He continues by stating that the computer is inherently no more evil than the abacus and that "the value of machines depends upon the use to which they are put by men."[84]

> In this respect history, on which Mumford has built one of the most complete philosophical syntheses of the modern age, may have escaped him. For the innumerable appliances and gadgets produced in the past thirty or forty years--which, together with birth-control pills, for instance, have opened an altogether new and almost incredibly more dignified life for women--have <u>not</u> thus far resulted in what Mumford calls 'a dismally contracted life, lived for the most part confined to a car or to a television set.'[85]

Temko has missed Mumford's point. As we have already observed, Mumford does not deny that the last generation has produced mechanical inventions which provide a potential improvement of man's state unimagined but a few

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[83]Mumford, "Utopia, The City and the Machine," <u>Daedalus</u>, p. 290.

[84]Allan Temko, "Which Guide to the Promised Land: Fuller or Mumford?," <u>Horizon</u>, Vol. X, (Summer, 1968), p. 30.

[85]<u>Ibid</u>.

decades ago. His point is that technical proficiency has become an end in itself rather than one of the means by which a more abundant life is made possible. In the present period, man is allowing the machine to write his life agenda rather than allowing a fuller conception of human life to write the agenda for the development of machines.

Since the mid-Forties Mumford has advocated the deliberate slowing down of the pace of invention. Unless we do so deliberately, he claims, catastrophe may well do it for us. For the great problem of mechanical improvement is its rapidity of development. While mechanical invention has been multiplying at a geometric ratio, our social skills and moral skills have been increasing at an arithmetic ratio. Indeed, in many cases they have been retreating.

> If this disparity had not existed, job insurance would have been invented at the same time as the factory system, and an active Union of Nations would have been produced, in lieu of the half-hearted and abortive Hague Conferences, during the decade when the Wright Brothers perfected the airplane.[86]

In order to reduce this disparity between mechanical invention and social invention, the first act of prudence would be the deliberate curbing of further scientific activity until adequate positive controls can be worked out. He reminds us that engineers such as Sir Alfred Ewing saw this need a half a century ago.

The reader's reaction to such a proposal is to question its realism on the basis of the fantastically high improbability of its implementation. Mumford's response is that there really is nothing new or untried in it, that such measures are daily occurrences in the business

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[86]Lewis Mumford, Values for Survival (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1946), p. 105.

world. Industrial monopolies do not hesitate to suppress an invention which may result in reduced profits for the total corporation enterprise, no matter how advantageous the invention might be to the larger society (e.g., the automatic telephone exchange). Why then, he asks, is it not possible for a society to suppress temporarily other inventions when such may result not in a loss of profit but in the extermination of the human race? Those who understand society's present condition, Mumford concludes, should act to freeze our present knowledge until education and law and personal discipline have become adequate to control it and direct it toward valuable human ends. "Only life is sacred. Knowledge and inventions are mere by-products of life."[87]

Anyone who has lived in the Twentieth Century can sympathize with Mumford for wishing to curb the advance of scientific knowledge until social acumen can catch up. The moral struggles of those scientists in the late Thirties and early Forties who were working on the development of the Atomic Bomb attest mightily to this impulse. The sensitive men among this group surely struggled every day with the questions of social priorities and moral responsibilities. But one wonders how the controls Mumford is asking for could be instituted without a resultant centralization of powers bordering on dictatorship, the very opposite of his understanding of the ideal form of government. In effect, he appears to be asking for an extended version of governmental control such as exists in wartime and which becomes increasingly oppressive as the conflict progresses. It is certainly true that particular inventions have been misused in the past and are being misused today. It is also true that our

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[87] Ibid.

social priorities are pointed toward mechanical invention rather than moral and social invention. But in the same way that censorship of the printed word seems to lead to an oppressive society out of all proportion to the small amount of prurient material it seeks to prohibit, suppression of invention leads to dictatorial forms of government which will ultimately manifest the very sickness Mumford wishes to avoid. Rather than suppression, ways must be found to shift the vision of the members of a society, so that the society's priorities shift also. Recent events in the cities of America may well force American society to do just this despite the reactionary quality of our immediate response. In sum, one can sympathize with Mumford's dilemma but feels constrained to disagree with his attempted solution.

Over the years particular results of new possibilities opened up by technics have occupied Mumford's concern, especially the already discussed Atomic Bomb, the automobile and super highways, and the skyscraper. It is important to comment on these because each in its own way stands as a symbol of the misuse of new potentialities. In a brilliant discussion on the work of Alfred Stieglitz, he sees in Stieglitz's photography a pictorial protest against the negation of life as symbolized in the skyscraper--a manifestation of human pride and distortion of human values. Mumford tells us that Steiglitz, surveying the city of New York a generation after his first survey, did so from the seventeenth story of an office building at Fifty-Third Street. He ironically portrays the surrounding skyscrapers "with no further hint of nature than the hour of the day, through the degree of light and shadow that falls on their triv-

ial facades."[88] His picture depicts them--mock cities of the future--in the final stage of mechanical perfection and human insignificance, devoid finally even of economic return, financial and social liabilities. A few years earlier than the essay alluded to above, in The Brown Decades, a study of the arts of America in the post-Civil War period, Mumford had summarized his reaction to the skyscraper in one sentence: It "gave encouragement to all our characteristic American weaknesses: our love of abstract magnitude, our interest in land-gambling, our desire for conspicuous waste."[89]

He views the automobile as exhibiting similar social weaknesses. Developed by a society which is so preoccupied with purely mechanical problems and purely mechanical solutions to those problems, the auto, potentially a useful social instrument, has become a liability. In an essay written in 1957 entitled The Highway and the City, he opens by criticizing Congress for inaugurating a twenty-six billion dollar highway program and predicting that within fifteen years the horrendous results of such a decision would be obvious. Anyone who lives in or near the major metropolitan centers of the United States today, not fifteen years later but ten, knows how accurate this prophecy was. Again, the misuse of the automobile exhibits an irrational pursuit of power and speed for their own sakes without any concern for national social goals. To increase the number of automobiles, to enable motorists to go longer distances and at higher speeds have become ends in themselves. The irony

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[88]Lewis Mumford, The Human Prospect, p. 168.

[89]Lewis Mumford, The Brown Decades (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1931), p. 139.

is that such ends, when not in the service of deeper motivations, become self-defeating, as our present predicament illustrates. Automobiles, built to sustain speeds of over one hundred miles per hour, crawl through congested city streets and men and women spend four hours per day traveling back and forth to a six- to eight-hour workday. In the light of the present decay of our cities a statement Mumford made in The City in History, written in 1961, while discussing the impact of the skyscraper and auto, is instructive:

> ...this purely mechanical system of growth becomes in the end self-limiting; for the disadvantages of crawling traffic...are the direct results of urban density...as well as the increase in the number of private motor cars...the time is approaching in many cities when there will be every facility for moving about the city and no possible reason for going there. Even now, the befouled and poisonous air, the constricted housing at three or four hundred residents per acre, the demoralized social life, teeming with violence and crime, have led to a general exodus from the central areas of cities. In this sense the disease is a self-limiting one; but only because it must eventually destroy the organism that has borne it.[90]

In recent years, man's power over nature has been increasing at a geometric rate. Thus, whereas a generation ago he used his machines to manipulate nature, now he is in the process of replacing it. Mumford has reacted to this development in ways consonant with his earlier work. He sees the present situation as the further result of an overdevelopment of one aspect of man's personality--his intelligence--to the exclusion of all others and sees the present world as one directed solely by this faculty in the service of power. Rooms formerly lighted by sunlight are being lighted by neon tubes; food once provided by plants and animals is being manufactured in the laboratory; snow and rain, once heralds of

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[90]Lewis Mumford, The City in History (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1961), pp. 430-431.

changing seasons, will soon be hidden from view by geodesic domes; and human beings, once the culmination of human desire and affection, will find their genesis in a test tube. In such a world all of man's efforts tend toward uniformity. In contrast to the organic diversities produced originally in nature and multiplied in large part by man's historic efforts, the environment is in the process of becoming as uniform and undeviating as a super highway in order to "subserve the uniform functioning of a uniform mass of human units."[91] The faster one moves, the more uniform is the environment and the less difference one finds when he reaches his destination.

Given modern man's assumptions, Mumford continues, it is not unreasonable to expect him to assault without reserve the richness of environmental individuality which still exists. Why should he not grind down the mountains "till the whole round earth becomes planed down to one level platform?"[92] Further, Mumford predicts that unless a fundamental change of direction occurs, we might expect also a new race of men who will be provided at birth with built-in responses, subject only to external controls. It may well be that frontal lobotomy will be as widely performed on children--in the interests of docility and manipulation--as tonsillectomy is now.

Allan Temko, referred to earlier, makes a similar point in a commentary on Buckminster Fuller's proposed "Tetrahedral City," when he states that such a city might better accommodate a superb robot than a man. Fuller's proposal is for a pyramidal structure two hundred miles

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[91]Lewis Mumford, The Transformations of Man, p. 126.

[92]Ibid., p. 127.

high and two miles long on each side which is to be a metropolis in itself:

> The vast structure, surely one of the most astounding visionary designs in the history of architecture, can either float on a moat in Japan, the earthquake-ridden, land-short country for which it was designed; or else it can be towed out on the ocean, freed at last from the chaos of history, with its nuclear power plant providing the energy to work its innumerable machines and its fresh-water distillery, and with supersonic airliners, giant ocean-going vessels, and electronic communications connecting it to the rest of the world and to outer space, where a Fuller-influenced settlement may then be in operation on the moon.[93]

In such a structure, Mumford would argue, men, torn loose from history, deprived of the richness of environmental diversity, and living in an atmosphere which discourages individual differences and preferences, would shrivel and die.

For such an environment is supportive not of human beings but of automatons, machines which Fuller described, "only partly tongue in cheek, in his answer to the question, 'What's a man?'":

> Man?
> A self-balancing, 28 jointed adopter-based biped: an electrochemical reduction plant, integral with segregated stowages of special energy extracts in storage batteries, for subsequent actuation of thousands of hydraulic and pneumatic pumps, with motors attached; 62,000 miles of capillaries, millions of warning signal, railroad and conveyor systems; crushers and cranes...and a universally distributed telephone system needing no service for 70 years if well managed; the whole, extraordinarily complex mechanism guided with exquisite precision from a turret in which are located telescopic and microscopic self-registering and recording range finders, a spectroscope, et cetera....[94]

Definitions such as this, Mumford contends, point unmistakably to the fact that machines increasingly are determining man's nature rather than

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[93]Allan Temko, "Which Guide to the Promised Land: Fuller or Mumford?," Horizon, p. 29.

[94]Ibid., p. 30.

man determining the nature of the machine.

These last few paragraphs anticipate dire possibilities, the advent of Post-historic Man. It is to these possibilities that the pages which follow will be directed. Mumford contends that if our civilization continues along its present path we can expect the following: an increasing emphasis on machine technics, the physical sciences, bureaucratic administration, and totalitarian government. These will unite to form an all-enveloping system, governed by a deliberately "depersonalized intelligence." Under such conditions all human purpose would be buried by a mechanical process immune to any human desire antithetical to it. Indeed, those who were most successful in eliminating all other desires and motivations would be the candidates for the highest offices: those of the Conditioners and the Controllers. In such an atmosphere, Post-historic Man and post-historic society would emerge.

Mumford has borrowed the phrase "post-historic" from Roderick Seidenberg, author of the book Posthistoric Man. Seidenberg, however, sees the emergence of Post-historic Man as inevitable whereas Mumford does not. Man, Mumford contends, still has the possibility of charting a different course. Since his analysis of Post-historic Man is similar, however, to that outlined by Seidenberg, it will be helpful at this point to summarize Seidenberg's position. He contends that "our culture and our civilization are moving inexorably toward a state of increasing justice and decreasing freedom."[95] This is the result of what Seidenberg

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[95]Roderick Seidenberg, "Justice for All, Freedom for None," The Center Diary, (March-April, 1967), p. 26.

sees as an irreversible trend toward increased organization in the procedures of modern life. One can see, he continues, in the emergence of collectivized societies the beginnings of mass man and mass humanity. One of the most profound implications of this development will be the absorption of the individual into the anonymity of the mass.

A major reason for this rapidly developing state is "the steady drift toward an encompassing rationalism. The increasing prevalence of organized modes of behavior represents an ever wider application of intelligence in the affairs of mankind" at the expense of intuition, feeling, imagination, guess and hazard.[96] This thrust carries with it the hidden threat of over-specialization. Already certain limiting conditions inherent in the triumph of intelligence can be perceived because in reducing the tensions of our cultural milieu, intelligence, unaided by other human attributes, is depriving the individual of that challenge which leads to his highest fulfillment, "of the intensity of being and apprehension which is the fertile soil of his creative achievements."[97] Increasingly, society, becoming ever more unified, "must reach a condition of ultimate performance and stability."[98] In sum:

> 'Divine discontent' will have vanished like a youthful fever. And not unlike the highly organized social insects--the ants, the termites, and the bees--man too may continue to survive unchanged, millenia upon millenia, in a truncated version of existence.[99]

Mumford builds on Seidenberg's discussion of intelligence and claims that if Post-historic Man does emerge, with intelligence uppermost man would apply to himself and other living organisms the same criteria he is now applying to the physical world. In his pursuit of power he

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[96] Ibid., p. 27. [97] Ibid., p. 28. [98] Ibid. [99] Ibid.

would create a society in every way consonant with the attributes of the machine. Like Seidenberg, Mumford envisages a social structure similar to that of certain insect societies which have remained static for sixty million years: "For once intelligence has reached a final form, it does not permit any deviation from its perfected solution."[100] Neither is open to change and in the end, intelligence will become unconscious due to a lack of opposition and alternatives. If intelligence dictates that there is but one answer to a given question, any departure from this answer must be regarded as either a failure of the mechanism or a perversity of the agent. The "party line" must be obeyed; and once scientific intelligence reigns supreme, even the party line will not change. Finally, life with its almost infinite potentialities, will be frozen into a single mold cast by intelligence alone.

Mumford continues by stating that practically none of the characteristic activities of Post-historic Man--terrestrial exploration, genocide, gene manipulation, destruction of all natural living spaces--has anything at all to do with the furtherance of life. Post-historic Man has "left the human behind him." What survives of his birthright he treats as an embarrassment to be eliminated as soon as possible. Already, Mumford claims, these paranoid dreams direct the life patterns of millions of the world's population. Writing in 1957 in The Transformations of Man, he states that "in the current plans for mass genocide, in a 'war' that would inaugurate and close the post-historic period, man's very humanity is the object of attack." In treating the "enemy" as ob-

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[100]Lewis Mumford, The Transformations of Man, pp. 120-121.

jects to be disposed of, Post-historic Man would debase both "the violated and the victim before bringing about their common annihilation."[101]

Although the hour is late, Mumford concludes, man still has the opportunity to reverse his present direction. There is still, even now, the possibility of renewal. Post-historic Man does not need to be man's final terminus. Instead, man can bring into being, if he will, a world culture. But to do this he must create a new self, one which is adequate to control the forces which now operate both aimlessly and compulsively. This self would take for its province the entire globe. It would seek not a mechanical uniformity but instead an organic unity, one based on the fullest utilization of all the resources revealed to man by nature and history. Such a culture would be nourished not only by a new vision of the whole but by a new vision of the self, capable of understanding and cooperating with the whole. If this were to occur, in place of world disintegration man would undergo another great historical transformation similar to that brought about by the great axial religions. But only a Herculean effort on the part of a cadre of renewed men and women is equal to the task. And time grows short!

Mumford's analysis of the present situation is chillingly accurate. Man does appear to have brought himself and his society dangerously close to an abyss from which there is no return. Despite isolated indications of potential for renewal, the predominant direction still is downward. Change is needed very soon if disaster is to be avoided. We

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[101]Ibid., pp. 129-130.

have seen one basic theme running through Mumford's analysis of man's current state--he suffers from overweening pride in unlimited power and, unless this power is rapidly placed in the service of prior values, he will destroy himself. Later chapters will develop more explicitly what these values are, but one can at least sense the direction in which Mumford is moving when he speaks of human balance, other claims on the personality than those of pure intelligence, an awakening of one's aesthetic and ethical sense, etc. These are dimensions of life which, if awakened and nourished, can lead man away from the precipice and toward life. Mumford is right! They are the qualities which make life worth living. Yet, how does one break loose from the bondage of the present? It is at this point that Mumford's program is less than adequate. His analysis of the illness forces us to ask the question, but his prescription leaves the reader unconvinced.

As we have seen, he believes that since "every institution is the lengthened shadow of a man," the way to renewal is through renewal of the man. Unless man is changed, social structures will not change, or if they do, will lead to further corruption rather than renewal. This is his realism. It explains his conviction that renewal will result from a cadre of renewed men and women who have found a new way of life and have the inner resources necessary to meet the demands of the time. One thinks of the band of early Christians who set out against overwhelming odds to challenge the might of the Roman Empire.

Mumford differs in this respect from Charles Frankel and Bayard Rustin who look for renewal through structural change. If, for example, Mumford felt that the solution to man's critical state was

structural in nature, he would lay stress on the ways in which structures necessary for the renewal of society could be formed. His writing would, in effect, become political in nature. In a pragmatic way he would attempt to guide men toward those social patterns by which their lives would be changed. Believing that man's values are ultimately the result of his political and social environment, Mumford's writing would reflect that conviction. Obviously, there are elements of this in his thought because he is not unconcerned with political realities. He makes innumerable programmatic suggestions which could easily be appropriated at this very moment. But, as we have seen, his basic thrust is not political but instead is what one might call personal or perhaps moral.

Mumford's basic insight is sound. For, as important as structures are and despite the fact that one should spend many of his working hours working toward structural change, unless persons are constantly renewed, all structures will be corrupted. It is probably accurate to say that those concerned with renewal in the short run should stress structural change but those concerned with renewal in the long run should stress personal change. Both are needed in the life of a society and indeed in the life of any individual. The former thrust keeps the latter from dealing in lifeless abstractions, and the latter provides the vision of man's true life without which a reformer takes on the image of that which he is seeking to reform.

However, although Mumford is aware of the need for constant self-renewal and though his realism leads him to the conviction that unless man's distortion of his own manhood is finally dealt with, it does not take him to the next necessary step, that man is not capable of lib-

erating himself from his present state to become what he ought to be. This omission becomes clear in Mumford's discussion on the nature of evil when he states that "the fact that evil is a constant element in life does not mean that one must submit to it but it means that, if one is to get the better of it, one must acknowledge it, and above all, one must repent of it--repent in the literal sense of changing one's attitude and turning away."[102] But this is just the problem--acknowledgment and repentance. As Mumford has rightly observed, contemporary man has not acknowledged nor repented of his bent toward self-destruction despite all the exhortation to the contrary. The tenacity of man's errant state is such that exhortation to change is not sufficient.

It appears that Mumford is expecting far too much of human nature. For on the one hand, his realism leads him to reject institutional change as the locus of renewal and yet on the other, his own proposal does not come to terms with those who build institutions. He asks man to do precisely what he cannot do: radically change both his concept of himself and his way of acting in his environment. He is asking man to reject what he is; and it is just this that human beings seem unable or unwilling to do. We are unable to live with a loss of selfhood which comes from either self-rejection or the rejection of others. Therefore, we resist with all the strength of our being any attempt to question our concept of ourselves because to do so means self-destruction.

This is precisely what Mumford is calling for. He is asking his reader to strip himself of his present selfhood in order that a new self might emerge. This is to ask for emotional suicide and since most

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[102]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 170.

men resist suicide, they will resist this also. Those who offer institutional change as an alternative are perhaps justified in claiming that for this reason their proposals may have more viability, since in attacking the institution they are not so threatening to the man. It is Mumford's demand for more than most men are willing or able to do that lacks realism about human nature on his part.

A more adequate position is one which, like Mumford, realistically confronts the tenacity of evil in man but which also attempts, as Mumford does not, to take account of the deep-seated need for acceptance on the part of man. The Christian faith has this potential in its doctrine of a God who accepts men whatever their past or their present. Such a God does not ask men to reject that which they are but asks instead that they accept the fact that they are accepted as they are. When one is secure in the knowledge that he will not be rejected, then he is able to expose himself to others. Then the searching analysis which Mumford presents becomes an effective agent for change and the social programs which reformers offer can be implemented. But without such confidence, one dares not face his present state because the experience is far too painful. Instead, he will continue to move along his present course deluding himself into believing he is living a life he was meant to live.

A classic example of this in the New Testament is Jesus' forgiveness of the woman accused of adultery. The issue was not whether the act had or had not been committed. It seems clear that it had. The point is Jesus' response to the situation. The act of the woman did not result in Jesus' rejection of her. Instead, it elicited a positive statement of continuing acceptance, "Neither do I condemn thee: go, and sin no more."

(John 8:11). Jesus was illustrating in this act the nature of the divine, one who totally accepts man to the end that life might constantly be renewed. This is the element lacking in Mumford's program.

The cadre of men and women he is looking for will emerge when, trusting in Him who accepts them beyond every extremity, they are freed to recognize their sin, repent of it, and act responsibly to usher in a more sane society. Man might then be able to control his pride in his own prowess. Other values inherent in human life might then be acknowledged. Social and economic structures might emerge with built-in safeguards against corruptions of the same. For men will be freed from the bondage of their past and present selves not by rejecting those selves but by trusting them to Him who accepts them as they are in anticipation of what they can be. The questions to be raised regarding this position, of course, are: Is there such a God who does accept one as he is? Is there a God in whom one can trust? These questions take on special significance in an age in which God seems more absent than ever before. I will withhold further discussion of them, however, until later points in this thesis.

Since Mumford's doctrine of sin has been so strongly influenced by that of Reinhold Niebuhr, it will be helpful to conclude this chapter by comparing the two positions. In doing so, the point made above will be further clarified. Niebuhr begins by contending that although sin cannot be excused, man is constantly tempted to sin by external forces not always of his own making. Specifically, man is tempted to "break and

transcend the limits which God has set for him."[103] The devil symbolizes a fact of human experience, that there is a principle or force of evil which exists previous to any evil human action. In the symbol of the devil, man's paradoxical situation of finiteness and freedom is seen. For it shows that man's false interpretation of his place in the cosmic order is not purely the product of his imagination. Instead, it is suggested to him by a force of evil preceding his own sin.

> Perhaps the best description of this mystery is the statement that sin posits itself, that there is no situation in which it is possible to say that sin is either an inevitable consequence of the situation nor yet that it is an act of sheer and perverse individual defiance of God.[104]

This is the tension in which man continually finds himself.

Like the animals, he is involved in the necessities and contingencies of nature. But, unlike the animal world, he is aware of the situation and is able to anticipate its possibilities. In other words, although man's knowledge, like that of animals, is limited by his time and his place, he differs from them because he has some awareness, as they do not, of his limitations. He seeks constantly "to understand his immediate situation in terms of a total situation."[105] However, because he is aware that his finitude distorts his definition of the total human situation, he stands always on the brink of meaninglessness. This condition is intolerable to him. "Therefore, he is tempted to deny the limited character of his knowledge, and the finiteness of his perspectives."[106] This tendency Niebuhr calls the "ideological taint," a continuing effort

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[103]Reinhold Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man, I (New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1955), p. 180.

[104]Ibid., p. 181. [105]Ibid., p. 182. [106]Ibid.

by man to hide ignorance by pretension.

Thus, in Niebuhr's thought, anxiety is seen as the internal description of the state of temptation. It is not in itself sin, because there is always the ideal possibility that faith would purge anxiety of the tendency toward sinful self-assertion. That is, if one could achieve an ultimate security of God's love, he could overcome all the immediate insecurities which life presents. Although this ideal is never fully actualized, it remains the impossible possibility which the Christian Gospel presents.

Anxiety, Niebuhr continues, plays a second role in the human drama beyond that of being "the precondition of sin." It is also the basis of all human creativity. In this context, he asserts, man is anxious because he does not know the limits of his possibilities. Each of his accomplishments presents him with new potentialities which he feels impelled to explore. Because he does not know his ultimate limits, he cannot remain satisfied with any accomplishment. But since it is difficult to distinguish between this latter function of anxiety and the former, one is never certain which of the two has assumed priority. "Anxiety about perfection and about insecurity are thus inexorably bound together in human actions and the errors which are made in the search for perfec- are never due merely to the ignorance of not knowing the limits of conditioned values. They always exhibit some tendency of the agent to hide his own limits, which he knows only too well."[107]

The sin which arises out of man's anxious state Niebuhr calls the

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[107] Ibid., p. 185.

sin of pride. (A second form which sin assumes, he says, is that of sensuality, but the former is more basic.) For the sake of analysis, Niebuhr distinguishes four related forms of pride: Pride of power, pride of knowledge, moral pride, and spiritual pride. Pride of power can be provisionally divided between that which does not recognize human weakness and that which seeks power in order to overcome or obscure a recognized weakness. Ultimately, this distinction breaks down, however, because the will-to-power "is an expression of insecurity even when it has achieved ends which, from the perspective of an ordinary mortal, would seem to guarantee complete security."[108] It appears that the more that immediate insecurities are eliminated, the more ultimate perils are generated. The second form of pride, pride of knowledge, is actually "a more deeply spiritual sublimation of his pride of power."[109] Niebuhr sees all human knowledge as tainted with an ideological taint in that it pretends to be more true than it actually is. Although it is finite knowledge, gained from a particular perspective, it pretends to be final and ultimate knowledge. Moral pride, the third form of pride, is revealed in all self-righteous judgments "in which the other is condemned because he fails to conform to the highly arbitrary standards of the self."[110] This is the attempt of the self to substitute its own standards for God's standards. It is the pretension of finite man that his highly conditioned virtue is the final righteousness and that his relative moral standards have absolute validity. It is the root source of the final form of pride, that of spiritual pride, which merely makes explicit the self-deification implied

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[108] Ibid., p. 194. [109] Ibid. [110] Ibid., p. 199.

in moral pride. This form of pride attempts to break down any discontinuity between one's partial standards and relative attainments and the unconditioned good. It claims divine sanction for finite and corruptible achievements, thus becoming the final battleground between God and man's self-esteem. Religion is most susceptible to this form of pride.

> Christianity rightly regards itself as a religion, not so much of man's search for God, in the process of which he may make himself God, but as a religion of revelation in which a holy and loving God is revealed to man as the source and end of all finite existence against whom the self-will of man is shattered and his pride abased. But as soon as the Christian assumes that he is, by virtue of possessing this revelation, more righteous, because more contrite, than other men, he increases the sin of self-righteousness and makes the forms of a religion of contrition the tool of his pride.[111]

A true religion of revelation, Niebuhr concludes, is rooted in the conviction that God speaks to man from beyond the furthest reaches of human possibility. Such religion discovers man's highest achievement not only to be short of the highest but involved in "the dishonesty of claiming that it is the highest."[112]

Finally, Niebuhr draws a distinction between individual pride and that of groups, one which Mumford would thoroughly endorse. He contends that group pride, though it has its source in individual attitudes, actually achieves a certain authority over the individual and results in unconditioned group demands on the individual.

> Whenever the group develops organs of will, as in the apparatus of the state, it seems to the individual to have become an independent centre of moral life. He will be inclined to bow to its pretensions and to acquiesce in its claims of authority, even when these do not coincide with his moral scruples or inclinations.[113]

Further, as Niebuhr points out in Moral Man and Immoral Society, the pretensions and claims of the social self exceed in dimension those of the

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[111] Ibid., p. 201. [112] Ibid., p. 203. [113] Ibid., p. 208.

individual. The group is always more arrogant, hypocritical, and self-centered than the sum of its individual members and thus possesses a greater potentiality for evil than one is aware of if he fails to view groups as having an independent life and ethos of their own.

One can recognize the similarities between Niebuhr's and Mumford's descriptions of the nature of sin and the forms it assumes. Mumford, like Niebuhr, sees it primarily as enormous pride which so consumes a man and a society that they cannot or will not face their own limitations.* This is seen clearly in Mumford's estimate of Henry L. Stimson, a "good and upright man, an exemplary citizen," who was so sure that his own decisions were untainted by evil that he not merely sanctioned the use of extermination bombing but, even after reflection on his decision, continued to justify what Mumford describes as an "infamous policy." Those who assume they are blameless, Mumford continues, do not repent.

> That rigid sense of self-righteousness, with its inability to confess the evils it commits and bring them to an end is perhaps the chief mark of a dying civilization. If it could admit the possibility that it was on the wrong course, and that every extra effort only hastened the moment of destruction, it would be able to change its direction. Not wishing to be other than they are, the blameless ones, in their self-love, cannot conceive the real alternative: another self, cleansed of guilt and freed from folly, capable of renewal.[114]

This is the same moral pride about which Niebuhr speaks. The differences arise when one looks for the basic cause and ultimate target of sin. For Niebuhr, as we have seen, sin is the result of profound anxiety; whereas, for Mumford, it results from what he calls in one instance "massive se-

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*Interestingly, Mumford states that a secondary form of sin is "inertia" which is strikingly similar to that which Niebuhr calls "sensuality."

[114]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 171.

renity and self-complacence."[114] Again, for Niebuhr, sin is ultimately committed against God; whereas, for Mumford, it is seen as being against man's best interests and stands in the way of his self-transcendence. Finally, the two positions differ in that Niebuhr's contention that the final judgment brought to bear upon sin cannot be man's but God's is a dimension which Mumford cannot accept.

Mumford also recognizes with Niebuhr the tragic quality of evil, at least on one level, and can say that it is an illusion to think that man is "naturally good and can at will avoid evil." He contends that Greek philosophers, who took pride in their goodness, and "humanistic philosophers of the Eighteenth Century type," who contended that man was born good and corrupted only by external institutions and wily authorities, were extremely naive. The illusion, he continues, that man is naturally good and "can at will" avoid evil is almost as serious an obstacle to human development as that which assumes man is naturally evil and can do nothing to change his state. "Both...leave human nature in a static condition, incapable of achieving wisdom through trial and error or reflective insight into its own actual nature."[115] But since Mumford has no place to turn for assistance at this point, unlike Niebuhr, he does not look to a resource beyond man but, as we have seen, calls for man to get the better of his situation by acknowledgment and repentance. The contradiction is so glaring that he must surely be aware of it. One can only conclude that his faithfulness to the realities of existence, as he observes them in his own life and that of others, impells him to agree

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[114]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 171. [115]Ibid., p. 170.

with Niebuhr that man cannot by effort of will avoid sin. Yet, unlike Niebuhr, he is unwilling to live with the paradoxical reality of the inevitable yet unnecessary fact of sin, since by so doing, he is driven to a resolution which lies outside man, a condition he cannot accept.

Niebuhr's resolution does point to resources which lie beyond man. The guilty one is confronted with the grace of a loving God as manifested in the cross of Jesus Christ. Through such an act the pride of the self is broken and life can be reoriented. Trusting in the divine, the self is freed from the constrictions of self-concern and made free for responsible action. This is not to say that the contradictions between human self-will and the divine purpose are forever solved. They are not. But the self, in its new orientation, knows the peace which springs from the certainty that there are divine resources of mercy to overcome again and again the continuing contradictions between one's self-love and the divine purpose. This, briefly, is Niebuhr's interpretation of the Christian doctrine of the Atonement which he claims is...

> ...the beginning of wisdom in the sense that it contains symbolically all that the Christian faith maintains about what man ought to do and what he cannot do, about his obligations and final incapacity to fulfill them...."[116]

Admittedly, one must accept this grace of which Niebuhr speaks as an act of faith. But, experientially, this resolution may find at least partial validation. Much contemporary psychoanalysis and professional counseling is based on the total acceptance of the counselee out of the recognition that only on the basis of such acceptance can one face his problems and work to overcome them. A healthy parent-child relationship seems to re-

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[116]Niebuhr, The Nature and Destiny of Man, II, p. 212.

quire the same attitude. One could cite other examples. But the point is that these examples seem, by analogy, to grant credence to Niebuhr's understanding of man's relationship to a loving God. The faith he expresses appears to clarify the human situation in a way which Mumford's resolution does not.

In sum, Niebuhr and Mumford reflect many similarities regarding the forms which sin assumes and its hold over men, but differ quite radically in how one comes to terms with it in his own life and the life of his society. As we shall see in another context in the final chapter of this thesis, one needs to raise the same questions about Mumford's positive program of growth in freedom as have been raised about his doctrine of sin.

CHAPTER III

PRELUDE TO A CRISIS

Mumford's analysis of the historical backdrop for man's present crisis will form the basis for this chapter. The purpose of the chapter is to highlight those men and movements which Mumford views as significant in forging our present situation, to point up the significance of particular individuals for Mumford's own position, to compare his judgments with those of several other scholars, and to comment critically on several of Mumford's positive proposals.

Mumford argues that the historical backdrop to man's present state can be seen in microcosm when one views the exploration and settlement of the New World. In an important introduction to the Beacon paperback edition of The Golden Day, issued in 1957, Mumford regards the westward movement of the American pioneer as an attempt, following upon the gradual breakdown of a unified Christian culture, to strike out on a new path and thus overcome the repetitive impasses of "civilization" as it had developed from at least the Fourteenth Century. This effort was born of necessity as the pioneer struggled mightily to survive in the face of a hostile wilderness. In this struggle modern man was brought face to face with values he had lost through centuries of neglect, "the ancient realities of paleolithic and neolithic culture, on which the life of the indigenous Indians was based."[117] On the frontier modern man turned to

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[117]Mumford, The Golden Day, p. xx.

the pre-civilized life as practiced for millenia in ancient cultures and lived on this older level with a new vitality, as a conscious release from civilization--"though fortified both with many civilized skills and with infiltrations of axial (Christian) morality."[118] Such a unique combination held great promise. This, unfortunately, went unfulfilled because man's civilized skills, without which the effort could never have begun, ultimately overwhelmed the axial values and the newly discovered ancient realities, thus transforming the pioneer into a latter-day barbarian. This American tragedy brings into sharp relief the broader human tragedy in which it is set--the worldwide insurgence of the mechanical-utilitarian side of man's nature at the expense of the romantic. Or, as Mumford states in The Transformations of Man, the last two centuries have witnessed the increasing triumph of utilitarian man over romantic man.

Romantic man, he continues, was the ultimate result of a general resurgence of vitality and sexuality in Europe dating back at least to Baroque times. Romantic man was convinced that civilized institutions and customs had placed man in emotional chains and that only the primitive and the untutored were capable of bringing him back to his true self. Mechanical-utilitarian man, on the other hand, traded vitality for power so that by a process of systematic regimentation in pursuit of gain, he promoted the material triumphs and the restrictive uniformities of civilization. For a brief period romantic man and mechanical-utilitarian man were bound together in that both were revolting against the restrictions of Old World culture. Witness the American pioneer! But quickly mechanical man began to dominate, so that ultimately romantic man's vi-

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[118] Ibid., p. xx.

talities became merely decorative activities gracing a purely mechanical routine, "like a picnic with an open fire in a paved urban backyard."[119]

The pages which follow will outline the historical roots of both romantic and utilitarian man as delineated by Mumford, and the ultimate triumph of the latter in the late Nineteenth and early Twentieth Centuries. Jean-Jacques Rousseau, probably more than any other single individual, was responsible for the insurgence of romantic man in the Eighteenth Century. Rousseau's intent was to undermine the mechanical conception of progress in order to restore traditional values which he felt were in a state of rapid decay. Mumford regards him, "with all his frailties and minor vanities," as the greatest figure of his time, rivaled in insight only by Vico, a much less popular figure. In Rousseau the romantic revolt against "despotism, regimentation, exploitation, slavery, polite conformity, callous mechanization, stifling luxury, life-denying custom" was most clearly and brilliantly articulated and the elements denied by mechanization--spontaneity, impulse, freedom, love--most brilliantly championed.[120] In thought and in life he attempted with mixed success to convince his contemporaries that most of the ills of life were the direct result of the arid rituals of an over-refined and over-organized civilization.[121] This latter sentence states a theme of great importance for Mumford. When in the succeeding chapter our attention is directed to Mumford's analysis of Fifth Century Greece and Nineteenth

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[119] Mumford, The Transformations of Man, p. 96.

[120] Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 273.

[121] Mumford, The City in History, p. 482.

Century New England, its significance for his thought will be further developed.

Though Rousseau's attempt to live a more simple and integrated life was based, Mumford believes, on two fundamental errors--(1) that man in the state of nature was a solitary figure who stood above human conventions and human restrictions, and (2) that man in society is less in a state of nature than if he existed on the level of his original animal needs--his search was a profound one because he was convinced, rightly, that"if one could behold the human race in its embryonic state one would know something significant about its adult form."[122] It is precisely at this point where Rousseau and Vico have contributed greatly to Mumford's thought, a contribution which matured in the publishing of The Myth of the Machine in 1967. In this book Mumford argues brilliantly for the need for disciplined speculation regarding man's origins if one is to understand better his present and his possible futures. Mumford is increasingly convinced that because modern man has hesitated to speculate, he has formed a distorted picture of himself by reading back too simply his present interests in machine-making into earlier times. Mumford contends, instead, that man's early interest in language, dream, and symbol was at least as important as his interest in toolmaking. Therefore what is needed are imaginative anthropologists who can throw off Twentieth Century biases in order to enter sympathetically the mind and life of early man. Hopefully, dimensions of man's life now lost will be recovered and new visions of what it means to be a man will come forth.

The Myth of the Machine is actually a severe criticism of con-

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[122]Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 274.

temporary anthropology because of the refusal of anthropologists to speculate beyond the visually observable material evidence. A recent example of such professional purism is Stuart Piggott's Ancient Europe from the Beginnings of Agriculture to Classical Antiquity published in 1967. Piggott utterly refuses to probe for the mind behind the suviving archeological matter. But as Theodore Roszak has observed, Mumford could have pointed out more clearly in The Myth of the Machine that within the last generation a "new anthropology" (so-called by Eric Wolf of the University of Michigan) is dramatically challenging the older and narrower position. Roszak quotes the English prehistorian Grahame Clarke, who, when speaking recently before the American Philosophical Association, described as a "common error" the supposition "that because archeologists are concerned with material data, they are limited to the material aspects of culture."[123] How broadly accepted Dr. Clarke's position is, of course, is subject to long debate. The point is, however, that Mumford has some allies among the specialists and he probably should have given more recognition to them in his analysis.

The famous search of the Romantic movement for "the noble savage" can be compared to Mumford's lifelong search for what it means to be a human being. Mumford is too good an historian to be unaware that Rousseau's so-called natural man was closer to the peasant of his day than the noble savage, and he views Rousseau's idealization of natural man as more a program of reform than a judgment about facts. But he identifies with Rousseau and the Romantic movement to a great degree in this program of reform and sees in Rousseau's prescriptions valid directions not only

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[123]"Scholar, Poet, Prophet," Manas, Vol. XXI, (January 31, 1968), p. 2.

for Eighteenth Century society but for the Twentieth Century as well. He describes it in the following way:

> instead of a mechanical ceremonial, a human response appropriate to the moment: instead of a complicated ecclesiastical scheme of salvation, based on original sin and fed by the love of power it condemned, the simple morality of the Savayard Vicar, with its direct appeal to the goodness of human nature and the universal nature of goodness.[124]

Mumford sees in this prescription at least a partial basis for a new way of life and a new educational process in the Twentieth Century, and finds its continuing influence in the thought and actions of such diverse figures as Chateau-Briand, Hugo, George Sand, Cooper, Thoreau and Whitman, Melville, Goethe, Kant, Tolstoi, and Emerson. Mumford sees more clearly than Rousseau the perverse potentialities in man's nature. But with this qualification stated, one born of insights borrowed from men such as Melville and Niebuhr and his own historical experience, he does stand essentially in the tradition of Rousseau.

Possibly Rousseau's most significant contribution, Mumford believes, was to understand the "savage" he knew best: "the child, that perpetual primitive of the race." He shares with Rousseau the view that the major business of a child's life is that of growth. Both men in their own times have attempted to conceive an educational method which would bring this to pass. Again, they are related in that both have challenged an exclusive preoccupation with letters, laid heavy stress on how much valuable education goes on outside the school, and have tried to bring back feelings and sensations into an over-mechanized educational process. Mumford quotes the following Rousseau passages which I quote also because they describe not only Rousseau's position on life and edu-

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[124]Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 278.

cation but Mumford's as well.

> Education comes to us from nature, from men, or from things. The inner growth of our organs and faculties is the education of nature, the use we learn to make of this growth is the education of men, what we gain by our experiences or our surroundings is the education of things.
>
> Those of us who can best endure the good and the evil of life have the best education.
>
> Teach him to live rather than to avoid death, and life is not breath but action, the use of our senses, our mind, our faculties, every part of ourselves which makes us conscious of our being. Life consists less in length of days than in the keen sense of living.[125]

Mumford accepts this definition of the nature of education without qualification. It is clear that both men conceive of education not as the fitting of an organism into a fixed mold but as assisting the organism in the unfolding of its own innate possibilities. Mumford gives us an indication of his reliance on Rousseau in a passage in Green Memories when reflecting on the growth of his son, Geddes, who was killed in the Second World War. In this passage, he states that a sympathetic participation in a child's purposes is essential to his healthy growth. But, often this is just the point at which teachers and parents are deficient. Speaking specifically of Geddes, he relates:

> His purposes were not our purposes, and we made no adequate attempt to make his purposes ours...Often we were unable to understand Geddes because we were unwilling to desert our own egos long enough. That pride, which is self-absorption, is the enemy of love. To be a good guide to the young one must learn as much as one imparts....[126]

In a broader context, Mumford, in an address entitled Education for War and Peace given in December, 1942, decried the results of an educational system which values adjustment over self-direction. Rather

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[125] Ibid., p. 284.

[126] Lewis Mumford, Green Memories (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company), pp. 81-87.

than educating young people for responsible self-direction, he claims, we have trained "smooth people" who learn to accommodate themselves to smooth situations. Our society is producing individuals unable to face life's emergencies (he had in mind, specifically at this point, the Second World War), incapable of self-sacrifice, initiative, choice, and self-control. In a footnote to this address, added following the Allied victory in World War II, he is unwilling to soften his judgment but states instead, "our superb achievement in war has not proved that our education system was adequate: what it has proved is that, by adding army discipline, comradely co-operation, and combat it _became_ adequate."[127]

In a widely circulated essay entitled _Education for a New Time_, Robert Theobald, independent of Mumford's analysis, makes strikingly similar comments about the present educational establishment. He says that basically we are making three errors: (1) We are still saying to young people that they ought to "listen and learn rather than strive with us"; (2) We "are teaching children to believe that questions are closed and soluble rather than teaching them to live with the uncertainty inherent in real life" and (3) "We teach children individual facts and relationships rather than gestalts."[128] Each of these comments was made by Mumford decades ago. Yet, though Mumford developed his contentions in more detail and in general more convincingly than Theobald, the nature of the present student generation and its impatience with the current educational system have given Theobald much more visibilty in this area than Mumford received. This is simply another example of the importance of a

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[127] Mumford, _Values for Survival_, pp. 173-174.

[128] Robert Theobald, "Education for a New Time," _Journal_, Vol. V, (March, 1967), pp. 3-4.

creative idea coinciding with the right moment in the historical process if this idea is to bear fruit. Hopefully, Mumford's writings on the nature of creative education will be reexamined in this new time.

Despite his appreciation of Rousseau's insights, Mumford is very critical of what he believes was Rousseau's ultimately limited understanding of human nature. These limitations, which became increasingly evident among Rousseau's followers in the Romantic movement, he views as basically threefold: (1) Although it was terribly important to stress the importance of feelings, it was erroneous to move from this insight to the conviction that "to exist is to feel." Much of the excesses in Emile and in Rousseau's less perceptive followers could have been avoided had Rousseau understood this more adequately. (2) Although it was necessary to insist upon the pupil's need for spontaneous expression, it was unwise to counsel total lack of restraint and discipline. For discipline is essential to the well-being of an individual and a society and without it there is chaos. Finally, (3) Rousseau was naive in believing he could educate students free from prejudices and free from habits for no one can be freed from association with the past and no one can live without some continuity of actions and life patterns.[129] Freedom, spontaneity, autonomy--all have a part to play in human growth, but alone they are insufficient. Mumford contends that to a very great degree the ultimate demise of Romanticism and its failure to influence the thought of the Nineteenth Century can be traced to these three limitations.

Mumford states that the second specific contribution of Rousseau and Romanticism and one which he has attempted to revive in our day lies

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[129]Mumford, The Condition of Man, pp. 284-285.

in its concern for domesticity and what he describes in varying places as "the cult of the lover." In this he finds Romanticism bringing back into public consciousness and action an essential element of Baroque society in which woman had become the "very symbol of expensive sensuous refinement and glowing vitality."[130] In The Myth of the Machine, reflecting his increasing interest in early man, he carries this trait far beyond Baroque society to primitive society and views it as an essential aspect of the developing life of primitive man. In this latter book, he contends that the process of primitive man's domestication is the result of the increased consciousness of sexuality, and states that it is possible to reconstruct a religious cult at the heart of the process, exalting the body and the sexual functions of woman as the ultimate source of all creativity.

> With the cultivation of plants, woman's special sexual characteristics became symbolically significant: the menstrual onset of puberty, the breaking of the hymen, the penetration of the vulva, the milking of her breasts, make her own life a model for the rest of creation. All these activities, in becoming concentrated and magnified, also become sacred.[131]

All this, however, had long since been lost so that by the Eighteenth Century love had become largely a cerebral affair with little room left for either passion or tender absorption. In such an atmosphere sexual passion rarely manifested those elements which Mumford regards as its two most significant and enduring qualities: its capacity for touching the deepest levels of human personality and its gift for endurance, "for waxing and waning, for changing on the instant from polar ice to equator-

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[130] Mumford, The Condition of Man, pp. 210 ff.

[131] Mumford, The Myth of the Machine, p. 147.

ial heat."[132] There was a great deal of sexual titillation--witness Diderot's interest in the playful eroticism of the Polynesians and the cult of Casanova--but very little sexual fulfillment, a condition, one might add, not unlike our own time. The intimate relationship between sex and love had been severed.

It was on this point that Rousseau and the Romantics challenged their society in a way not dissimilar to Mumford's challenge of our own society. For it was the intention of the Romantic movement, at its best, to unite love and parenthood with the graces of friendship. Rousseau pleaded eloquently for a healthy and eager maternity and for a new sense of tenderness in male-female relations. He infused into the dull sexuality of his period a sensitiveness to nature, a warmth of feeling, a keen responsiveness to varying moods, and a faculty for confession-provoking intimacy. With him, "love preserved the distances of friendship, and friendship, becoming more whole-souled and more all enveloping, began to achieve the intimacies of love."[133]

Mumford speaks with much feeling on this particular matter because he is convinced that a rebirth of the cult of the family in the mid-Twentieth Century is a necessity if personal and social transformation is to occur. The violence and evil of our time he views as the work both of impotent men who lust after sadistic power to conceal their failure as lovers, and repressed and frustrated men, lamed by unloving parents, who seek revenge by taking refuge in a mode of life from which love is excluded. Our society is peopled, he claims, by individuals whose

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[132] Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 287.

[133] Ibid., p. 289.

erotic impulses have been isolated from life's normal rhythms and who thus are incapable of assuming the responsibilities incumbent on lovers and parents.

For change to occur in an environment such as ours, marriage, Mumford says, needs to recover an erotic depth and effulgence in which a more creative family life is fostered. To this end, homes must become more generous in space to give full play to family life; social measures must be introduced to assist financially those parents who wish to have four or five children; many of the functions now assigned to the schools must be returned to the homes; and the growth of children, even the systematic habit of recording this growth in family albums, must be lovingly observed. For the denial of love and the occasions which foster it arrest love's development in every other part of one's life; whereas love's expression through the various stages of attachment and detachment contributes to human maturity, "all the more because the last step in parental love involves the release of the beloved: the willing cutting of the cord that would otherwise keep the child in a state of emotional dependence."[134]

While one can agree with Mumford and his predecessor Rousseau that more deep-rooted and lasting ties among husband and wife and parent and child are of utmost necessity in an increasingly more impersonal period, Mumford's prescriptions do not appear to take enough account of the realities of the present period. Instead, they reflect a sentimental attachment on Mumford's part to the world in which Rousseau lived, and in which much of one's life was centered in the family. The reality of the

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[134]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 284.

present period is very different and thus demands a different response than that of a return to Eighteeenth Century domesticity.

Before leaving Mumford's discussion of Romanticism's "cult of the lover," it is important to note his criticism of it. By way of this criticism we are able to see the balance which Mumford views as necessary between one's private and public life. He states that it was at the point of Romanticism's deepest insight into the nature of love--the need for privacy and intimacy in penetrating the deeper levels of personality--that its ultimate corruption of the same arose. For the attempt of two lovers to build a life around each other at the expense of the demands and responsibilities of the larger society is ultimately destructive. All too quickly, he continues, love for the isolated other becomes self-love because the romantic wants to see himself constantly in the eyes of his beloved. Deprived of society, the ego loses any sense of its own dimensions, thus creating an inflated and suspicious personality which treats every claim of the real world as a conspiracy against it. Mumford views the irony of Romantic love, then, as beginning by fostering a renewed sense of intimacy and ending by encouraging destructive self-love. He traces this perversion from Rousseau himself through Fichte's doctrine of Autarchy into the manic cult of German National Socialism. "By complex but nevertheless tracable connections there is a tie between the private confessions of Jean-Jacques Rousseau and the public confessions--with their paranoid mixture of suspicion and self-adulation--of Adolf Hitler."[135] The subtlety of this criticism is easily missed. Mumford is saying, in effect, that not only should one involve himself in

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[135]Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 291.

society's affairs because he has a responsibility to do so, but more importantly, one must do so for the sake of his own soul. For without the sanative balance which society and its demands bring to bear on one's personality, he loses contact with reality.

Two final comments which Mumford makes about Romanticism should be stated: its inability to come to terms with radical evil and its inadequate grasp of the dialectical nature of all life. These weaknesses, he claims, it shared with the total humanitarian movement of the Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries whose ranks included not only those identified with the Romantic movement but Rationalists such as Diderot and Christians such as John Wesley. This movement, imbued with a genuine compassion for humanity, ultimately produced far below expectations because of its conceptual limitations.

The mood in which the humanitarian movement began its work was set by Rousseau's famous dictum: "Man is naturally good and...our social institutions alone have rendered him evil." In this statement lies the movement's naivete, for although in its actions it was carrying forward the positive impulses of Christianity, it was at the same time devoid of the sound Christian doctrine of evil. The doctrine of the natural goodness of man gave a deceptive appearance of ease to the whole process of social reform by over-attention to social transformation at the expense of individual transformation. It asked natural man to give to his utmost--"only to be hurt and surprised to find out how little that was."[136] Because of its belief in man's natural goodness, it desired immediate revolutionary change by purely external devices and was progressively and

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[136] Ibid., p. 294.

resentfully bewildered by its lack of success. Too often unchanged men were seeking to change social structures so that their altruism became "egoism on collective parade." "One must not be prepared merely to alter institutions for the good of other men: One must be prepared to alter the form and contents and purposes of one's own life."[137] I have already noted in the previous chapter where Mumford tends to place the stress—on men rather than institutions. Any system in the hands of unregenerate men is corruptible, and conversely, regenerate men can use the varying insights of any number of systems to promote a better life. Mumford is convinced that many of our social institutions need to be changed. But he believes that this change will occur only on the basis of a cadre of changed men. His problem is that his program is not adequate to this task.

The final error of the Romantics, in Mumford's estimation, was an over-simplified conception of the nature of all life. Their vision of a perfect life freed from opposition, convention, compulsion, and internal conflict rested on the assumption that there is some final state in which life will be free from danger and turmoil. They never knew that the essential nature of all life is not ultimate tranquility, but instead "a finely guarded balance between stability and change, between growth and decay, between renewal and death."[138] This criticism is the same one which Mumford makes of the suburb which he, in fact, describes as the supreme embodiment of romantic thought. Therefore, a brief review of his interpretation of the suburb and its historical development should help clarify his criticism of Romanticism.

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[137] Ibid., p. 295.

[138] Ibid., p. 300.

The suburb, he begins, dates at least as far back in history as the ancient city of Ur, if evidences of suburban developments uncovered by Woolley are valid.[139] Both paintings and funerary models depict the suburban villas surrounding ancient Egyptian cities. In Biblical times, little huts were constructed in the midst of open fields or vineyards not only to guard crops but also to refresh the soul wearied by the pace and corruptions of the city. In Hellenic times, the gymnasium and the academy were often located in the suburbs; and in the medieval period after the Twelfth Century, the monastery was often settled outside the city walls before the city, by its continued growth, finally surrounded it. As early as the Thirteenth Century, Villani reported that the land for a circle of three miles around Florence was occupied by rich estates with costly mansions; and a few centuries later Stow noted that outside the walls of London people were laying out little gardens and fantastic summer houses. In the Eighteenth Century the increasing growth of the metropolitan centers and the spreading industrial towns caused a rapid acceleration of suburban growth. In 1795 Soame Jenyns remarked that tradesmen's wives who felt suffocated by the smoke of London must have their villas at Clapham, and in 1850 a writer in the Quarterly Review remarked, "Nothing has so much contributed to drive away the opulent from the dwellings of the poor as the dread of their unwholesomeness and dirt." Finally, in the mid-Twentieth Century the city is inhabited largely by those who are unable to afford the suburb, and the massive economic-industrial complexes which determine the patterns of contemporary life. Those who shape the direction of these complexes, Mumford

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[139]Mumford, The City in History, p. 483.

concludes, shuttle back and forth between their homes in an increasingly distant suburb and their daily work. One might add that now even the economic-industrial complexes are beginning to abandon the city en masse in favor of the suburb and leave the city to the urban poor.[140]

Mumford views the advantages of the suburb historically as resting in its hygienic superiority, its possibilities for a more fully developed family life, and its presentation of the opportunity to have life on one's own terms, even if this meant having it alone. "To be your own unique self: to build your own unique house, and a unique landscape... this was the purpose of the original creators of the suburb."[141] They hoped to be able to overcome, as individuals, the chronic defects of civilization while still commanding at will the benefits and privileges of the city. Unfortunately, the many defects of suburban living, magnified in recent years by an increasing lack of communication between city and suburb, have undermined whatever virtues it once possessed.

Very generally, the defects are those shared by Romanticism--the myth of tranquility. For not merely has the suburb increasingly kept the busier, dirtier, and more productive activities of the city at a distance; it has also exchanged creation for boredom in which life has ceased to be a drama full of unexpected challenges, tensions, and dilemmas. Mumford states the issue in the following way:

> ...the suburb served as an asylum for the preservation of illusion. Here domesticity could flourish, forgetful of the exploitation on which so much of it was based. Here individuality could prosper, oblivious of the pervasive regimentation beyond. This was not merely a child-centered environment: It was based on a childish view of the world, in which reality was sacrificed to the pleasure principle.[142]

The suburbanite shares with the Romantic philosopher the illusion

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[140] Ibid., pp. 482-503. [141] Ibid., p. 486. [142] Ibid., p. 494.

that in life there are no oppositions, no routines, and no polar tensions. Both forget that man knows no security which is not ultimately precarious and no bliss that may not be lost by the very fact of its uninterrupted continuance. The fact that the Romantic did not grasp this adequately, Mumford believes, resulted in an insufficient response to the Nineteenth Century challenge and a retreat into irrelevance.

Mumford begins his discussion of the mechanical-utilitarian man of the Nineteenth Century by viewing him as the outcome of a process begun centuries before in the break-up of the medieval synthesis and indeed incorporating personality elements which had been millenia in the making. His goal is defined by Mumford as that of working incessantly to multiply the powers and widen the services of the machine, to produce an increasingly larger bulk of goods, in order to sire more consumers to produce more goods. Prometheus became the new deity and work became the new gospel of salvation. The religion of this era coincides with the conclusion of Goethe's Faust: "The man who ever toilsome strives, him only can we save." Work served not only to bring riches, but in a value-starved environment it served to distract rich and poor alike from ultimate enigmas, insoluble problems, and ideal vistas. The fact that one can define Twentieth Century man in the same terms merely proves Mumford's working thesis--that there has been no fundamental change in the direction of human life since that time, merely an increase in tempo and a sharpening of focus.

Man's true life, the utilitarians insisted, "consisted in having more wants than could be supplied by the machine, and inventing more ways

in which these wants could be varied and expanded."[143] Whereas traditional religions had sought to curb appetites, this new religion discovered ingenious ways to stimulate them. In the name of economy, ever new devices were invented; and in the name of efficiency, new forms of mechanical time-wasting were devised. But every real economy was nullified by an increasing appetite for goods and power.

Lacking a humane value scale and a priority schedule based on human needs, Mumford continues, it was assumed that the new was better than the old, the mechanical better than the vital, the active better than the passive, and that the financially profitable was a sufficient indicator of the humanly valuable.

Since all of life was interpreted in terms of the practical, truth, goodness, and beauty were either horribly distorted or totally neglected. Mumford quotes a passage of J. S. Mill contained in a review of Tennyson's early poetry as all too typical:

> It would be a pity that poetry should be an exception to the great law of progress that attains in human affairs; and it is not. The machinery of a poem is not less susceptible of improvement than the machinery of a cotton mill; nor is there any better reason why the one should retrograde from the days of Milton than the other from those of Arkwright.[144]

Mumford views Mark Twain as a typical mechanical-utilitarian man because for all his surface pessimism he saw industrialism as the gateway to man's maturity, and for all his insights he was fundamentally a barbarian. In a letter to Walt Whitman, which Mumford quotes in full in both The Golden Day and The Condition of Man, Twain expresses the convictions of the age.

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[143] Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 304.

[144] Ibid., p. 305.

To Walt Whitman:

> You have lived just the seventy years which are greatest in the world's history and richest in benefit and advancement to its peoples....What great births you have witnessed! [He lists recent inventions]....Wait thirty years, and then look out over the earth.... You shall see...man at almost his full stature at last!....Wait till you see that great figure appear, and catch the far glint of the sun upon his banner; then you may depart satisfied, as knowing you have seen him for whom the earth was made, and that he will proclaim that human wheat is more than human tares, and proceed to organize human values on that basis.
>
> Mark Twain[145]

Thirty years later in The Golden Day, fifty years later in The Condition of Man, and seventy years later in The Myth of the Machine, Mumford looked out over the earth and saw man not at his full stature as Twain had predicted but instead as rapidly transforming himself into a savage. Twain was not wrong in proclaiming the importance of invention. His mistake was that by doing so he unfortunately turned his vision from those Nineteenth Century developments which held promise of placing invention in the service of man's higher development. He forgot that this was also the century of "Goethe, Emerson, Tolstoy, Hugo, or Beethoven, Schubert, Brahms, of Delacroix, Goya, Courbet, Renoir, Rodin, and not least of Whitman himself," men who attempted through their work to reinstate the human personality at the center of the historical process and to redress the balance between the inner and outer world.[146]

Mumford contends that because utilitarian man refused to face the irrational elements in his nature or the mysteries inherent in the world he inhabited, his sensibilities were correspondingly reduced. The resulting esthetic insensibility hid from his vision the hideous squalor

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[145]Mumford, The Golden Day, pp. 87-88.

[146]Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 306.

and ugliness which his careless pragmatism visited upon his landscapes and cities; his moral insensibility blinded him to the misery of the poor he exploited daily; his biological insensibility anesthetized him against the animal joy missing from the drab routine he foisted on himself; and his intellectual insensibility shielded him from confronting the shams, contradictions, and self-deceptions on which his life was based. Further, as he increasingly learned to distrust his emotions and feelings, inevitably they came out in surreptitious, coarse, and degraded popular forms.

The environment which utilitarian man created for himself Mumford names Coketown, a term used by him as far back as The Story of Utopias and reiterated again and again. An indication of his increasing pessimism is evident, however, in the way he sees the step beyond Coketown in the Nineteen Sixties compared to his forecast in the Nineteen Twenties. In The Story of Utopias he states guardedly that the "Coketown idolum has been disintegrating a little during the last two decades, under the influence of the garden cities movement,"[147] but in The City in History he states instead that the successor to Coketown "has created instruments and conditions potentially far more lethal than those which wiped out so many lives in the town of Donora, Pennsylvania, through a concentration of toxic gases...the exploitation of uranium to produce fissionable materials threatens...to poison the lithosphere, the atmosphere, the biosphere...in a fashion that will outdo the worst offenses of the industrial town."[148]

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[147]Mumford, The Story of Utopias, p. 213.

[148]Mumford, The City in History, p. 481.

In "A Close-up of Coketown," a section in The Culture of Cities which Mumford inserted also in The City in History practically word for word almost twenty-five years later, he describes in some detail the Coketown environment. With the exception of cities which still contained vital residues of medieval tradition, towns were built with no regard for any physical features except the location of the industrial plant. Socially, therefore, contrary to popular opinion, the emerging towns were far more crude than the feudal villages of the Middle Ages.

The prevailing color of Coketown was black. Black soot issued from factory chimneys and the railroad yards, cutting through the town's center, spread black cinders. Black clothes emerged as a protective coloration and the black stovepipe hat was almost a functional design. The by-products of the industrial process quickly turned a green landscape into a black and forbidding tomb. Under such conditions, one must have all of his senses blunted in order to be happy. The inhabitants of Coketown began to eat canned goods and stale foods, even when fresh ones were available, because they could no longer tell the difference. Color-discrimination became feeble, also, so that soberer colors were preferred to pure, bright, colors. Mumford wrote about this development at great length in The Brown Decades, a study of the arts in America from 1865-1895. Both the pre-Raphaelites and the Impressionist painters were reviled by the bourgeoisie because their pure colors were thought to be "unnatural" and "inartistic."

Next to dirt, the other peculiar distinction of Coketown was noise, the baneful effects of which are only now being fully realized. Experiments with sound conducted in Chicago during the Nineteen Thirties pointed up that if one grades noise by percentages up to one hundred per-

cent which is the sound that would drive a person mad if continued for an extended period, the countryside has from eight to ten percent noise, the suburbs fifteen, the residential districts of the city twenty-five, commercial districts thirty-five. "These broad lines would doubtless hold almost anywhere during the last century and a half, though perhaps the upper limits were higher."[149] Then, too, Coketown made no effort to separate factories from the workers' homes so that in many towns noise was omnipresent, in the day and often at night.

It is interesting to note that recently, as social scientists are searching for the reasons behind increasing urban violence, noise is emerging as a possible major factor. John R. Lancellotti, a staff writer for The Record, quotes two experts in the field of noise abatement. The first states, "As way out as it may seem, noise seems to be a factor in the current outbreak of violence." The second claims: "We may be approaching the upper level of noise tolerance and for the first time in the history of man, escape may no longer be possible."[150] No one is sure at this time exactly how closely related noise is to acts of violence, but an increasing number of experts seem to agree that the relation is a close one. This will come as no surprise to Mumford.

Mumford concludes that if one considers Coketown on its lowest physical terms, without reference to its social facilities or culture, never before have such vast masses of people lived in such a savagely deteriorated environment. Many classes of people had known a comparable foulness, but never before has such been accepted so universally as nor-

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[149]Lewis Mumford, The Culture of Cities (New York: Harcourt, Brace and Company, 1938), p. 195.

[150]Statements cited by John R. Lancellotti in The Record, August 1, 1968.

mal and inevitable. But Coketown was merely the inevitable creation of utilitarian man, intoxicated by power and stripped of humane values.

This brief description of Coketown serves as a good example of Mumford's understanding of the way in which the priorities of a given period in history shape environments and how the created environments then reinforce the priorities. Other examples which Mumford develops include the city structures of Ancient Egypt and Mesopotamia, the Greek city states, the medieval city structure, the New England village, and contemporary metropolitan areas. As has been observed earlier, his analysis always begins with the following statement or one similar to it: "Every institution is the lengthened shadow of a man." But he does not stop there because the institutions created mold the men who are to follow. Take, for example, the human products which Coketown produced. Anyone reared in a Coketown environment can confirm Mumford's analysis of the kind of man which this environment helped to create over an approximate one hundred-year period. Unfortunately, however, there appears to be little contemporary awareness of the significance of this insight. Instead, man today appears to be so intoxicated with his own prowess that he feels that if what he builds one day is unsuitable for the next, he can simply tear down and build again without any lingering consequences. Since his surface life is lived so much in the present at the expense of the past, he fails to recognize the continuing influence of prior structures on him; and influences, when unrecognized, can be very dangerous. Man is not simply a creature of the moment. He is also a creature of the past and of the unformed future.

Further, contemporary man fails to recognize the influence of the unconscious and subconscious upon his psyche, preferring instead to be-

lieve he acts only on the basis of pure reason. He forgets that one can tear down past structures, but the subtle influence these structures continue to exert are not so easily uprooted. In Mumford's reminders of the continuing influence both of man's past creations and the unconscious upon us, we become more aware of the roots of our own inclinations and of the influence which these will have on our children. The environments we are molding today will form to a great degree the men and women we will have tomorrow.

We need to move now to a brief exposition of Mumford's analysis of the historical forces which shaped mechanical-utilitarian man. For in doing so, we become aware of the reversal in direction which he feels is needed if man is to survive. Mumford believes that the forces of disintegration can be traced in a direct line from the Fourteenth Century and states in The City in History that they were essentially three in number: (1) A new economy, that of a mercantilist capitalism; (2) a new political framework, mainly that of a centralized despotism or oligarchy, usually embodied in a national state; and (3) a new ideological form, that derived from mechanistic physics. Each of these contributed to and benefited by the social disruption following the medieval synthesis, a disruption heightened dramatically by the Black Death which appeared in Europe in 1347 and which, in a matter of but a few years, killed between a third and a half of the population of western Europe.

Mumford places great significance on this tragic event. He contends that the largest part of every culture is transmitted, not through a few institutions and a handful of texts, but by "a million daily acts and observances and imitations." This, incidentally, helps to explain his continuing interest in reconstructing in great detail the daily mundane

life of individuals in varying periods. For in such reconstruction the values by which the people of a particular period lived are revealed. Thus, since as much as a third of the population, or possibly a half in large cities, was lost within a matter of weeks because of the Black Death, "a multitude of skills, a vast heritage of living knowledge, and an abundance of sensitive discriminations" were irreparably lost. Further, the psychological shock of such a tragedy was momentous. The Plague occurred in a society which felt secure, throwing security into foul disorder and hideous misery. "The breach thus opened marks a line between two ages: on one side, unity and on the other disintegration," a unity which has never been recaptured. In brief, the effect of the Plague was that of an emptying out of the social heritage between the Thirteenth and Fifteenth Centuries.

> When the people ot the Fifteenth Century in Italy again resumed the heritage of Greece and Rome, they had the illusion that they were departing from their benighted "Gothic" ancestors whereas in fact they were only taking up once more the interests that had lapsed as a result of plague and social upheavals.[151]

However, as catastrophic as the Plague proved to be in the rapid dissolution of the medieval order, it merely hastened an inevitable death. Medieval culture had become moribund. It had turned its back on contemporary experience and refused to modify its nature accordingly. Mumford follows Huizinga's analysis of this disruption and cites such weaknesses as the church's inability to control usury; her inability to purify corrupt administrative procedures; the inability of the Scholastics to adopt their methods to the new demands of a developing science; and the failure to prevent the absorption of free cities, feudal estates, and

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[151] Mumford, The Condition of Man, pp. 152-155.

monasteries by the central government. Mumford's detailed analysis of the breakup is beyond the scope of this thesis.

Rather than summarize in any chronological way the development of the forces which led to mechanical-utilitarian man (the reader can do this for himself by going directly to Mumford's own works), I will attempt instead to isolate in each of the three forces under consideration those developments which Mumford finds significant. The first major force was that manifested in the rise of "mercantilist capitalism" and the birth of what Mumford calls economic man, who came into being, Mumford states, in the Fourteenth Century. Economic man distinguished himself from medieval man in a number of respects. First of all, he embraced the seven cardinal vices of medieval society and transformed them into virtues. Avarice ceased to be a sin for him and became instead an important habit for the development of future capital investment. Greed, gluttony, avarice, envy, luxury, and pride became incentives to action in pursuit of gain. The church succumbed to this transformation more rapidly than any other institution and in the interests of its own survival flaunted the very faith it espoused. Mumford sees the reason for this basic change in the differing life stance of the medievalist and economic man. The medievalist lived under the aegis of an all-inclusive value system, one which provided direction for all of life's activities. One's economic life, ideally, as his other activities as well, was made to conform to the dictates of God as known through the church. Economic man knew no such value structure nor did he see himself as interrelated with other men. He viewed himself not as an integral part of an interrelated whole but as an isolated individual whose sole purpose was individual gain. The medieval synthesis, as imperfect as it was, at least integrated man's life. Un-

fortunately, when it dissolved, there was nothing positive to put in its place. Whereas previously one's life was seen as fulfilled insofar as the life of his society was fulfilled, this was no longer true. One's life now became increasingly isolated from that of those around him. Indeed, one's neighbor changed from that of compatriot to that of competitor. In such an atmosphere, pride and luxury, Mumford contends, became the basic virtues. Pride, he says, once rightly seen by the church as the most dangerous of sins, became the very pillar of the economic order.

It is quite obvious that this analysis of man's economic life, as it developed in the Fourteenth Century, is essentially no different from the analysis Mumford makes of contemporary economic man. The difference is simply one of degree. For he sees the situation in the Twentieth Century as a magnified version of that which emerged in the Fourteenth. Therefore, he contends that until somehow some new synthesis of life and thought is found, this condition will prevail. We cannot return to the medieval synthesis but, in some way, the unity of life this period so imperfectly manifested must be recaptured in forms appropriate to a new era.

A second characteristic of emerging economic man was his ability to transform and redirect for his own purposes Christian doctrines and habits as expressed in the medieval period. Probably the most significant such transformation, Mumford believes, was that based on the doctrine of heavenly salvation, the postponement of present pleasures for the sake of a greater future reward. Capital saving was rooted in this conception--present self-denial through investments and savings will result ultimately in future self-aggrandizement. Further, the concept of judgment lurked in the background of the processes of bookkeeping. Double-entry bookkeeping, according to Lucas, began late in the Thirteenth

Century in Genoa, and Luca Pacial published a treatise on bookkeeping by this method in 1494 in Venice. These are important dates because in commercial bookkeeping the day of judgment is always close at hand. "No matter what one's hopes, ambitions, schemes, the figures themselves provide a check upon the unbridled human imagination."[152] This arithmetic regularity and its accompanying quantitative approach was a necessary component in an increasingly complex society. Unfortunately, rather than supplementing qualitative discriminations, it increasingly replaced them.

A third development in the personality of economic man was that relating to a regular habit of life as symbolized by the introduction of town clocks in the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Centuries. Mumford views the mechanical clock as quite significant, designating it as one of the key inventions. In addition to regulating the activities of the day, it caused men to cease regulating their actions according to the sun and their own natural bodily processes in favor of its own independent standards. The clock brought exact measurement and temporal control into every aspect of one's existence.

He states that Karl Marx was the first to understand that the clock was the archetypal model for all later machines. In a letter written to Friedrich Engels in 1863, Marx observed that "the clock is the first automatic machine applied to practical purposes; the whole theory of production and regular motion was developed from it." Mumford extends the influence of the clock beyond the factory and cites its importance in the solving of important mechanical problems "in transmitting and governing motion." Further, by its increasing accuracy, crowned by the inven-

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[152] Ibid., p. 165.

tion of the ship's chronometer in the Eighteenth Century, it became the model for all instruments of precision.[153]

These latter two developments had direct moral consequences. Increasingly, work and its accompanying rewards were viewed as that which gave man dignity; and the merchant, the embodiment of self-discipline, objective standards of accuracy, and regularity of life, became an ideal personage. Mumford quotes Erasmus as saying of John Colet, Dean of St. Paul's Cathedral, that "for his part, he found less corruption in such a body of citizens (the merchants) than in any other order or degree of mankind." And given certain presuppositions there was sound reason for this praise. Economic man did possess a certain kind of moral soundness: "a firm will, a sober regard for consequences,...unflagging zeal that evened out the ups and downs of temperament," and a basic integrity of character.[154] Unfortunately, these potentially positive traits were in the service of a system which by its very nature was geared to bring out the worst in man at the expense of his best. Further, as the moral underpinnings of economic man, which he brought with him from his Christian past, began to fall away, his integrity of character diminished accordingly. Increasingly, the system triumphed over and molded the man.

This historical analysis by Mumford of the beginnings of economic man has great importance for our time over and above its pure historical value. For in light of recent developments in cybernetics, economic man may no longer be a possibility, no matter how one feels about the virtues or vices of capitalism. In effect, the cybernetic revolution threatens

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[153]Mumford, The Myth of the Machine, pp. 285-286.

[154]Mumford, The Condition of Man, pp. 166-167.

or promises (one can take his choice) to bring economic man, at least in the classic sense of that term, to an end. Increasingly, since the Eighteenth Century, our society has been so structured that a man's sense of self-identity has become dependent on the work that he does and the income he derives from this work. The cybernetic revolution is seriously threatening this value structure. For whether one accepts the prognoses of men like Michael Harrington or Robert Theobald that in the near future ninety-eight percent of the world's population can live on the labor of the remaining two percent, or if he accepts the more modest prognoses of men such as Robert Sarnoff and Ralph Helstein that a twenty-hour week is imminent, the results are similar. The concept of work tied directly to income is rapidly being eroded and the values related to this concept are in need of serious evaluation. The greatest resistance to this revolution is likely to come from those who believe that to be a man means necessarily to bring home a paycheck earned by the sweat of one's brow. Mumford's analysis of economic man, however, as an historical phenomenon developing out of a particular set of circumstances rather than as one who necessarily embodies values intrinsic to the human personality, helps clear the way for a new concept of man more relevant to a changing time and one more related to qualities basic to the human personality. By placing this particular phenomenon in perspective, he has opened the way for a new concept of man. This new concept need not turn its back upon all that economic man represents but can incoporate those positive traits which Mumford delineates in a new and more adequate synthesis.

The second major force leading to mechanical-utilitarian man, Mumford contends, was that of poliical absolutism. For at the time that

capitalism was taking hold of the economy of Western Europe, political power was rapidly being centralized in a relatively small number of city and territorial states, absolutist in nature. And with few exceptions, the capitalistic financial concentrations and the emerging political despotism went hand in hand; one supported the other. The first of these despotic states was that of Emporer Frederick II in Sicily; and in this beginning, one can see all the vices of tyrannical government from Napolean to Hitler. Typically, Frederick destroyed the power of the feudal lord, centralized the administration of justice by providing for appeal from the feudal courts, did away with all popular elections, and wiped out the integrated corporate life which had prevailed up to that time. In general, citizens were reduced to subjects and the new state became their universal prison. "Under Frederick, people were forbidden even to marry out of their country without special permission: they were forbidden any leeway in religious belief; and they were not allowed to study abroad: in short every detail of totalitarian tyranny was present."[155] Hence began the change from the absolutism of God and the Holy Catholic Church to that of the temporal sovereign and the national state, both as a source of authority and an object of collective worship.

Central to this development is that which Mumford calls "the pathology of power." So long as Christian doctrines and insights as espoused in the Middle Ages exerted an influence on social institutions, the pride which accompanies power was partially restrained. But as the Christian Church waned in influence from the Eighteenth Century on and the cleft between religion and politics widened, the pride of despots be-

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[155] Ibid., p. 170.

came unbounded. Louis XIV is the classical example. Because his ego could not bear the appearance of anything which seemed to curb his ego, he deliberately avoided Paris in order to avoid contact with those Parisians who did not share to the same degree the illusions his courtiers foisted on him.

Mumford sees the philosophical underpinnings for absolutism in Western thought as being supplied primarily by Machiavelli who contended that ideals have no place except to serve as a disguise for actions which contradict and betray them. The Prince, says Machiavelli, must always seem on the side of virtue only so that he might work more effectively in the pursuit of power; for within the state, power alone is virtue, and like virtue, is its own reward. In The Prince, Machiavelli found a justification for his position in the Christian doctrine of original sin. But whereas in Christian thought, Mumford states, original sin is bound up with the possibility of grace, redemption, and perfection, Machiavelli knew no such balance. He conveniently turned a half-truth into a brazen lie and made this lie his excuse for absolutism.

Mumford rightly sees in Machiavelli a horribly limited understanding of human nature, but unfortunately one which continues to influence political thought to this very day. Men are, Mumford states, "ungrateful, voluble, dissemblers, anxious to avoid danger, covetous of gain." To this extent Machiavelli was correct. But there is equal historic evidence to show, Mumford contends, that men are also "loyal, honest, ready to face danger, indifferent to personal gain when principles are at stake or loyalties are awakened."[156] It is precisely this capac-

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[156] Ibid., p. 172.

ity for both good and evil which gives human character both its unexpected debacles and its creative upsurges. "Man's very loyalty to symbols, to 'mere' words, and 'mere' personal feelings, confounds every purely materialist code of conduct."[157] This statement anticipates a fuller development of Mumford's constructive position at a later point in the thesis.

According to Mumford, the ultimate tendency of despotism was finally revealed by Thomas Hobbes in The Leviathan. The destination is automatism, for despotism can succeed only to the extent that it can turn men into automatons. Society for Hobbes is a battleground of brute power; life is simply "a motion of the limbs;" and just as automatons, like watches, moved by springs and wheels, may be said to have artificial life, so man conversely may be treated as a natural automaton, a self-operating machine. "To make men mechanical was merely to reverse the process of making machines human."[158]

Since Mumford's vision of a perfect society is that of self-generating individuals responsibly involving themselves in working toward a common social goal, he stands unalterably opposed to Hobbes and to despotism in any of its forms. Men are not machines to be manipulated but organisms which are meant to grow and to mature. But at the heart of maturity is that which despotism cannot allow nor countenance--the right and the need to question. For unless one can question he has no self-identity. Rollo May once stated:

> To be able to question is the beginning of one's experience of identity. The function of questioning is that it distinguishes self from the world, makes possible the experiencing of one's self as a subject

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[157] Ibid., p. 173.

[158] Ibid., p. 176.

> in a world of objects. The danger, when a person is treated as an object of control and fundamental questioning is prohibited, is that this experiencing of the self as a subject in relation to a world of objects is lost.[159]

Mumford would second this statement. He is arguing for an educational process and a political system in which one's freedom to question is seen as the very basis of self-development. He is not an anarchist! He is well aware of the need for restraints on human behavior which law provides. But the laws cannot be imposed on citizens from an authority external to them. Rather, the laws are to arise out of the common experience of citizens of equal privilege and equal responsibility.

As has been stated earlier, throughout Mumford's writing one finds a refreshing concreteness of analysis. He never makes a point in the abstract, but instead, always uses specific examples to prove a point. This is particularly true in his discussion of absolutism. The following summary statement will do two things for us then: develop further his contention that one of the formative forces in the development of mechanical-utilitarian man was absolutism and, at the same time, illustrate the concreteness of Mumford's historical methods. In a section entitled "Movement and the Avenue" in The Culture of Cities (and repeated practically word for word over twenty years later in The City in History) in which he is describing the architecture of the Baroque city, Mumford states that simply by laying out a number of new avenues the character of cities and their peoples were radically changed. He describes this development as the linear evolution of the city in which the movement of

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[159]Rollo May, Psychology and the Human Dilemma, as quoted in "We Have No Blueprints," Manas, Vol. XXI, (January 10, 1968), p. 1.

wheeled vehicles played a critical role.[160]

He sees a basic characteristic of the avenue as that of its political and military usefulness to the ruling powers. Using Alberti (1485) and Palladio (1581) as his principal sources of information, Mumford cites Alberti as distinguishing between main and subordinate streets. The main streets, characteristically, were named by Alberti viae militares and were to be straight. Alberti knew that to achieve the maximum appearance of order and power on parade, one needs either a large open square or a long unbroken avenue.

Palladio's contributions in this respect were at least two-fold: (1) He stated that "the ways will be more convenient if they are made everywhere equal; that is to say, that there be no place in them where armies may not easily march." (2) He distinguished the military avenue from the non-military in that the former pass through the center of the city leading from one city to the other and that they "serve for the common use of all passengers for carriages to drive or armies to march." Thus, Palladio contended that the non-military streets should be regulated to the same principle as the military and the more alike they are, the "more commendable they will be." "In view of the importance of the army to the ruling classes, it is no wonder that military traffic was the determining factor in the new city plan...."[161]

Mumford points out that the effect of the regular ranks, the long lines of marching troops and the regularity of the avenue was one of unabashed power, precisely the effect the ruling despot desired. It helped keep the populace in order without coming to an actual test of strength

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[160]Mumford, The Culture of Cities, p. 94. [161]Ibid. p. 95-96.

which always carried with it the bare possibility of the army's defeat. The spectators gathered periodically to be duly awed and intimidated by the might of the national state.

> The buildings stand on each side, stiff and uniform, like soldiers at attention: the uniformed soldiers march down the avenue, erect, formalized, repetitive: a classic building in motion. The spectator remains fixed. Life marches before him, without his leave, without his assistance: he may use his eyes, but if he wishes to open his mouth or leave his place, he had better ask permission first.[162]

In such ways as this, Mumford sees despotism's attempt to make men fit subserviently into the pattern of a larger machine as being accomplished. Obviously, this was a slow process--it took centuries of tyrannous indoctrination and mechanical habituation. But by the Seventeenth Century, the ideological framework had been constructed; and by the Eighteenth, La Mettrie in Man the Machine could treat man as a purely mechanical phenomenon--a product of matter and motion. In doing so he dissociated man from his personal, social, and biological self until finally all that remained was a bare skeleton composed of "carbon, oxygen, hydrogen, nitrogen, and minor quantities of chemicals that could be found in any chemist's shop."[163]

Although the cry for political reform began increasingly to be heard in the Seventeenth and eighteenth Centuries and, indeed, actual reforms did transpire in many quarters, Mumford sees them as thwarted in that those who espoused reform traced the evils of life to tyrannical government and neglected to confront the personality distortions which such government had developed. This was a natural reaction but one which has caused much mischief since. Indeed, Mumford sees it at the heart of the weak utopian heritage of the present day.

Further, the increasing influence of capitalism was actively

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[162] Ibid., p. 97. [163] Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 178.

molding men's consciousness. Men sought not only to be free but also rich, so that the unrestricted pursuit of economic power led to disparities, inequities, and legalized injustices in the economic sphere as the unrestricted pursuit of political power had done in the political sphere. No one, not even Robert Owen, thought seriously of applying the principle of political democracy to the organization of factories. They were run on absolutist principles and the automatism of the workers was taken for granted, obedience was enforced as strictly as in the army. The organizers of the factory system assumed the uncontested right of the capitalist alone to rule in the domain of production. Hence coercion and mechanical organization went hand in hand to the end that Pope Pius XI in Quadragesimo Anno could state: "Bodily labor...has everywhere been changed into an instrument of strange perversion; for dead matter leaves the factory enobled and transformed, where men are corrupt and degraded."[164] Thus, Mumford concludes, despotism, along with its ally capitalism, had prepared a fertile soil in which utilitarian man could take root.

The third and final force in the development of mechanical-utilitarian man was that related to new developments in what Mumford calls mechanistic physics. Between the Fourteenth and Seventeenth Centuries a revolutionary change in the conception of time occurred in Western Europe, from the predominance of organic time to that of mechanical time. In large part this was the ultimate result of the regular measurement of time made possible by the introduction of mechanical clocks in the Thirteenth Century and the even earlier influence of the medieval monastery.

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[164] Ibid., pp. 308-309.

On this latter point, Mumford repeats Alfred Whitehead's contention that the scholastic belief in a universe ordered by God was one of the major foundations of modern physics, but adds to it the further contention that behind this belief was the presence of order in the institutions of the church itself,[165] particularly that of the monastery. The clock and the monastery were mutually supportive in the development of the orderly punctual life which ultimately emerged:

> The order and regularity that was introduced into the monk's day... was timed and paced by the hour-glass, the sun-dial, and eventually, the clock. From the monastery, this time-keeping habit spread back to the market-place...so that from the Fourteenth Century on a whole town would time its activities to the ringing of the tower clock's bells.[166]

By its very nature, the clock dissociates time from human events so that its increasing influence helped create the belief in an independent world of mathematically measurable sequences: the special world of science. Drawing heavily upon Henri Bergson, Mumford states that there is little foundation for this belief in common human experience, particularly in terms of the human organism. Human life has regularities of its own, the rhythm of wakefulness and sleep, of hunger and satiety, of energy and weariness, and submits to mechanical time with great reluctance. Further, while mechanical time is strung out in a succession of mathematically isolated instants, organic time (Bergson's durée) is cumulative. Though mechanical time can be speeded up or run backward, organic time moves in one direction only--through the cycle of birth, growth, development, decay, and death--"and the past that is already dead

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[165] Mumford, Technics and Civilization, p. 12.

[166] Mumford, The Myth of the Machine, p. 265.

remains present in the future that has still to be born."[167]

Mumford is no romantic on this score. He is well aware of the gain in mechanical efficiency through coordination and through the closer articulation of the day's events. He knows that the absence of routine would mean the "speedy disruption and eventual collapse of our entire society."[168] What he is asking for is balance--a recognition that along with the need for mechanical order is the need for organic growth which cannot be regulated by the clock but which respects life's natural rhythms, its intimate ties to the past and its projections for the future. His is the same plea which the American Indian is making today as the threat of mechanical order closes in upon him. The Indian increasingly recognizes the need for routine, but he is as yet unwilling to accept it wholesale. It may well be that his stubbornness on this issue will prove one of the saving graces of American society.

Along with the change in the conception of time went a similar change in man's conception of space. No longer did bodies exist separately as absolute magnitudes but were coordinated with other bodies within the same frame of vision and must be in scale. It was one of the great triumphs of the Baroque mind to organize space, to make it continuous, to reduce it to measure and order, to extend the limits of magnitude in terms of distance and minuteness, and finally to associate it with motion and time.

These changes, Mumford states, were first formulated by painters and later by cartographers. While the Flemish realists had accurate perceptions of space, it was the Italians of the Fifteenth Century who or-

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[167]Mumford, Technics and Civilization, p. 16. [168]Ibid., p. 17.

ganized space on mathematical lines, within two planes, the foreground and the horizon line. The Italians not merely correlated distance with intensity of color and quality of light but also with the movement of bodies through the projected third dimension. This study of perspective demolished the closed vista, lengthened the distance toward the horizon, and centered attention on the receding planes.[169]

Similarly, the cartographers, beginning with Andrea Banco in 1436, began to conceive their maps on rational lines. By laying out the invisible lines of latitude and longitude, the cartographers paved the way for the explorers which were to follow. As with the later scientific method, the abstract system precluded rational expectations, even if on the basis of inaccurate knowledge. The navigator could now venture beyond the shoreline into the unknown, set his course toward an arbitrary point, and return approximately to the point of departure.

Presently, on the basis of these new conceptions plus the contributions of new inventions (the magnetic needle, the astrolabe, the rudder), improved building procedures, and the lure of adventure, an interest in space as such and motion as such arose. Thus, the categories of time and space, once practically dissociated, had become united: "and the abstractions of measured time and measured space undermined the earlier conception of infinity and eternity, since measurement must begin with an arbitrary here and now even if space and time be empty."[170] The conquest of space and time had now begun. Increasingly, life's tempo quickened and magnitudes were increased.

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[169] Mumford, The City in History, pp. 364-365.

[170] Mumford, Technics and Civilization, p. 22.

These new conceptions provided the backdrop for the emerging ideological form of mechanistic physics which coalesced in the Seventeenth Century in the minds of such men as Bacon, Descartes, Galileo, Newton, and Pascal. Through such men, the mechanical weltbild came into existence which was to provide the soil for the propogation of future inventions and the spread of machines. Since Mumford's analysis is similar to many other analyses of this particular phenomonen, it can be summarized with very little detail.

The method of the physical sciences rested fundamentally on three basic principles: (1) the elimination of qualities and the reduction of the complex to the simple; (2) concentration on the outer world and the elimination or neutralization of the observer regarding the data with which he works; and (3) limitation of the field, specialization of interest, and subdivision of labor. In short, the physical scientist limited himself to those aspects of existence which lent themselves to accurate factual information and to generalized statements. While this was valid in certain aspects of experience, unfortunately the tendency of the time was to extend it to all experience and deny any experience which fell beyond its scope.[171]

Mumford states that "to fix attention upon a mechanical system was the first step toward creating system: an important victory for rational thought."[172] But in order to perform this role effectively, it was necessary to go behind the "real" world as it presents itself to the ordinary observer and reduce it to such elements as could be ordered in terms of space, time, mass, motion, quantity. This called for a great

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[171] Ibid., pp. 46-47. [172] Ibid., p. 47.

deal of elimination and rejection as stated by Galileo, whom Mumford quotes at length. In other words, physical science confined itself to the so-called primary qualities and rejected the secondary qualities as subjective. Actually, however, a primary quality is no more basic than a secondary. Mumford uses the example of smell and contends that biologically smell is probably more important for survival than the ability to discriminate the primary qualities of distance and weight.

Since the instruments of science were helpless in the realm of qualities, qualities were increasingly reduced to the subjective, the subjective was dismissed as unreal, and the unseen and immeasurable regarded as non-existent. Intuition and feeling did not affect mechanical process or mechanical explanations. Art, poetry, organic rhythm, fantasy were deliberately and progressively eliminated so that as the outer world of perception increased in significance, the inner world of feeling became more and more impotent.

Division of labor and specialization, increasingly characteristic of economic life, dominated also the world of thought. Both were expressions of the same desire--mechanical accuracy and quick results. Research became very individualized and the objects of such were divided into minute parts for careful and painstaking scrutiny. But such isolation and abstraction, unless accompanied by organic integration, leads to conditions under which real organisms cease to function effectively.

> In short, the accuracy and simplicity of science...were not an approach to objective reality but a departure from it. In their desire to achieve exact results the physical sciences scorned true objectivity; individually, one side of the personality was paralyzed, collectively, one side of experience was ignored.[173]

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[173] Ibid., p. 50.

What was left for utilitarian man to inherit was the bare, depopulated world of matter and motion. Thus, in order to thrive at all, the inheritors of the Seventeenth Century repopulated the world with new organisms which fit reality as conceived by the physical sciences--machines. From henceforth, machines would multiply and dominate existence because their competitors had either been effectively silenced or consigned to obscurity. Machines were the supreme embodiment of primary qualities, for they had no regard for appearance, sound, smell, or any other sort of sensory stimulation. If science presented an ultimate reality, then the machine was indeed the true manifestation of everything of significance. Its invention became a duty. By renouncing a large part of his humanity, a man could achieve godhood. "He dawned on this second chaos and created the machine in his own image: the image of power, but power ripped loose from his flesh and isolated from his humanity."[174]

We have seen in Chapter Two of this statement that, according to Mumford, man's worship of the machine has continued at an accelerating rate into the mid-Twentieth Century so that unless a radical change in direction soon occurs, Post-historic man, a creature molded in the image of the machine, will emerge. The machine, while a valuable aid to man's development if placed in the context of a broader value system, has thus far served instead to reduce man's definition of himself because he has used it as a model for the nature of human life. But what if man's technological inventions did not reduce the definition of human life but instead broadened this definition? What if technics actually became the vehicle by way of which Romantic man at his best could be introduced to

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[174] Ibid., p. 51.

the Twentieth Century? It is precisely this possibility which is raised by Edmund Carpenter, an anthropologist who reviewed Mumford's The Myth of the Machine in The New York Times Book Review Section, April, 1967. If Carpenter is right, his comments represent an important corrective to Mumford's thought. Therefore, I will briefly review his statements and comment upon them.

Carpenter agrees with Mumford's central thesis that man is not primarily a tool-maker but instead a "mind-making, self-mastering, self-designating animal," and lists particular examples of "primitive" cultures to support this thesis. He agrees further with Mumford in his criticism of the kind of societies which man has forged over the past several centuries, societies which mass-produce people and goods alike. Though he accuses Mumford of naivety, he supports what he describes as Mumford's call for a "return to joyful common toil, where no man is a stranger, afraid in a world he never made."[175] His disagreement, however, centers in his conviction that Mumford is not in touch with the latest developments in technics, those related to electronics.

Mumford, Carpenter claims, is "out of date" and thus, though what Mumford said in the Twenties and Thirties about technics may have been accurate, what he is saying in The Myth of the Machine in 1967 is no longer valid. This, continues Carpenter, is due to Mumford's failure to distinguish "between the mechanical world of segmentation and sequence, and the electronic world of unity and simultaneity."[176] In failing to dis-

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[175]Edmund Carpenter, "Man, The Mind-Making Animal," a review of The Myth of the Machine, in The New York Times Book Review, Section 7, April, 1967, p. 20.

[176]Ibid., p. 20.

tinguish between the electronic and the machine, Mumford is not able to appreciate the possibilities for unity and harmony which the new electronic world of communication provides. Electricity, says Carpenter, is not just another machine. "It is more organic than anything. It unites everyone."[177] One might say that whereas machines were the supreme embodiment of the so-called primary qualities, spoken of earlier, new developments in electronic communications are creating a world in which secondary qualities, so basic in tribal life, are re-emerging.

Carpenter continues his argument by stating that the impact of electronic communications is more immediate on an Eskimo or a Navaho than it is on mechanized man. The Eskimo finds it easier to get involved because he simply switches tribes whereas Western man must accept an alien electronic world at the same time that he gives up a familiar mechanical one. Carpenter states that if Mumford would have recognized that electricity is not just another machine but indeed a challenge to all that the machine represents, The Myth of the Machine would have come out differently. Mumford would have delighted in these new developments, taken a more positive view of new possibilities among young people reared in this age, and would have seen that many of his proposals for change are not denied by the emerging electronic world of communications but, for the first time, are viable possibilities. Instead, because he does not recognize the difference, rather than looking to this emerging world as a model for the organic personal and social life he desires, he is forced to look backward for models which, Carpenter contends, are no longer real possibilities. Carpenter concludes by stating:

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[177] Ibid.

> We are all blind to the immediate, to the human reality. To understand the young and ourselves, we must understand both the mechanical world we have left and the electronic world we are entering. 'Life can only be understood backward,' observed Kierkegaard, 'but it must be lived forward.'[178]

Carpenter's comments are thought-provoking. It may well be that Mumford, the prophet, has fallen prey in this instance to the danger which faces all men--that of becoming captive to the present so that we become unable to see the emerging future. It may be that the emerging electronic world does presage an age of organic men living in an organic world in a way that Mumford has not been able to imagine. Perhaps the mechanical world which produced a fragmented man is being replaced by an electronic world which gives promise of producing a unified man. However, if this is true, it does not mean, as Carpenter seems to imply, that the historical models which Mumford looks to for guidance, and which we will discuss in the following chapter, are no longer helpful. It means that they will have to be related in an imaginative way to the new possibilities for human renewal which electronics presents.

It is uncertain, of course, whether Mumford would agree with Carpenter's distinction between the world of the machine and the emerging electronic world. But even assuming that he might, he probably still would ask if this new phenomenon will mature rapidly enough to save man from self-annihilation. Or, instead, has mechanical-utilitarian man taken us to a point beyond which we cannot return? Have our psyches been so molded by the developments of the past several centuries that they will resist too long the transformational possibilities which electronic communication offers? The basic question is: Will mechanical-utilitar-

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[178] Ibid.

ian man become Post-historic Man or will he become the One-world Man envisioned by Mumford, whom Carpenter insists electronic communications have already brought us?

In sum, Mumford views Nineteenth Century mechanical-utilitarian man and his Twentieth Century successor as the ultimate product of over five centuries of development. Capitalism provided the incentive for his actions in pursuit of material gain; absolutism produced the unthinking and unfeeling automatons without which a mechanized society cannot continue to function; and mechanistic physics provided the machines by which Nineteenth Century man's degraded desires could be satisfied and the automaton's skills implemented. A more robust Romanticism might have been able to counteract these wholesale human negations and place the positive energies they unleashed in the service of a humane value system. But the Romantic, overwhelmed by the emerging industrial order, was driven into the background, a fact which had immediate significance for the development of Nineteenth Century man and more long-range significance for man's present condition--one which threatens to move from so-called New-world Man (mechanical-utilitarian man) to Post-historic Man.

With this chapter and the previous one containing Mumford's analysis of man's crisis situation, we move now to a development of his positive program of renewal. This will entail first a look at particular men and periods from which Mumford draws inspiration, next an analysis of the influence of religion on his thought, and finally a development of his own concept of the Person.

CHAPTER IV

HISTORY AS A REPOSITORY OF POSSIBILITIES

Mumford believes that if man is to save himself from the disintegration which is rapidly approaching, a change in attitude toward his past is imperative. Increasingly, he contends, modern man is falling under the spell of an anti-historical bias. He lives by Henry Ford's famous dictum that "history is bunk." For him time has become something to be overcome rather than that which gives him perspective for his present and future. Living wholely in the present, he has no basis by which he might judge the adequacy of his contemporary experience. Thus, he gives to the present an ideal character unwarranted by the facts, and projects a future on the basis of an experience so limited as to be ludicrous. If, on the other hand, man did not ignore his historical heritage but instead looked to it for new direction, if he were willing to learn from its achievements and failures, a new present and a new future might be achieved. It is with this hope that he urges his readers to turn to their heritage. I will first attempt to outline his understanding of the purpose of the historical enterprise and then discuss particular historical individuals and periods which Mumford finds particularly important.

Mumford uses the example of the United States to point up the fallacy inherent in a society's attempt at radical historical discontinuity. He views the beginning of the American story as an attempt on the part of a fledgling country to turn its back on the history of Europe and

establish every institution de novo on a rational basis. At least in part, the first decades of the American experience were filled with the expectation that an entirely fresh start was possible, "thanks to the virgin continent and the new political constitution and the substantial equality of all men and ranks in this new world."[179] Mumford admits that there was a salutory quality to this enthusiasm in that it produced social experiments not possible in a society straight-jacketed by its history. But it soon became evident to perceptive observers, such as Walt Whitman, that if American culture was to continue to be productive, it had to draw from the cultural wells of Europe and the East. Building on this insight, Henry Adams, Henry James, and others led their generation back to Europe in an attempt to recover their abandoned heritage. They realized that neither the Atlantic Ocean nor the American Revolution should or could separate them from their "ancestral selves." This return, at its best, was not made to the end that one's history should bind him to his past. Instead, it was a recognition, similar to that in our day which has renewed the interest of our Afro-Americans in their heritage, that the past could be a repository of new possibilities. Unfortunately, however, this fresh insight was grasped by but a handful of individuals and never penetrated deeply into the American psyche. The mainstream of the American experience has been increasingly anti-historical in orientation until at length we have enslaved ourselves to the narrow and compulsive present. Our present crisis situation, to a great extent, results directly from this error.

America's experience, however, is not atypical because men in all

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[179] Mumford, The Human Prospect, pp. 197-198.

cultures, Mumford contends, have never carried enough of their past with them. One can describe this tendency in a number of ways, the "...Renaissance is one name for this anti-historical movement; Protestantism is another; utopia is a third; and revolution is a fourth."[180] Each of these, while potentially creative, ultimately fails because rather than working within the historical process to change its direction, they attempt to remove themselves from the process. Not only is such an attempt an impossibility; it also ignores the positive values which one's past has to offer. Man is not called to abandon history but to perpetually rethink, reevaluate, and relive it in the mind.[181] For it is only by deliberately recapturing the past that one can learn from it and escape the unconscious but ever-present influence of that in it which is destructive.

Further, one gains power to escape the limitations of his own society only as he lengthens his historical perspective, because in so doing he becomes aware of aspects of his personality he is neglecting at his peril. Mumford wrote The Golden Day, for example, for this very reason--to point to qualities inherent in Nineteenth Century Transcendentalism, now ignored, which are necessary for any future integration; he sketched the history of The Condition of Man to point to the historic significance of man's dreams and purposes without which societies decay; and he wrote The Myth of the Machine to make men aware, through an imaginative analysis of man's origins, that contemporary man's overemphasis on the role of technics leads him to deny those aspects of his personality most basic to human life. In each of these books, as to some degree in all his writing, Mumford hopes to assist men in throwing off the lim-

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[180] Ibid., p. 197. [181] Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 12.

itations of one epoch's vision by the correctives which other periods provide.

One might comment, however, as some critics of his writing have suggested, that Mumford's own historical sense may be somewhat myopic in that his choice of a relatively few historical periods for present and future guidance seems rather arbitrary. Some reviewers, for example, have claimed that his exposition of the life of the New England village at times reflects more of Mumford's own vision of what a community ought to be than what the actual historical situation was, that his interpretation to some degree reflects a personal ideal lovingly imposed on an historical actuality. T. F. Hamlin, in a review of Sticks and Stones, one of Mumford's earliest and most uneven books, contends that because Mumford has found "his long-sought Utopia" in the Puritan village of the Seventeenth Century he may be unable to view the New England village as objectively as he ought. Hamlin states, "in the presence of one's divinity one's eyes are always veiled."[182]

Mumford's answer to this charge is that he does recognize weaknesses inherent in New England village life; he is aware that the New England village never fully actualized all its ideal possibilities. But despite these limitations, he contends, one does not need to impose his own ideal form on the historical actuality because by comparing it as objectively as possible with almost every other urban form, one is led to see that it provided opportunities for human maturation which the others did not. The New England village was not utopia. It was an historical actuality which, with all its weaknesses, freed men to grow beyond them-

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[182]T. F. Hamlin, Review of Sticks and Stones, by Lewis Mumford, The Nation, CXIX (December 3, 1924), p. 604.

selves. Therefore, though men today cannot return to that village, many of the principles on which it was based need to be reincarnated in forms appropriate to a changed time.

In a statement in Sticks and Stones Mumford summarizes beautifully his understanding of the historical enterprise:

> The future of our civilization depends upon our ability to select and control our heritage from the past, to alter our present attitudes and habits, and to project fresh forms into which our energies may be freshly poured.[183]

This admirable statement reveals that, so far as Mumford is concerned, men study history as a repository of possibilities. History is "the domain of the possible, the starting point of the ideal."[184] Our reflection upon it reminds us that men are not condemned to a rote continuance of their present course but can cause new mutations in the historical process. This process obviously entails great dangers because our enthusiasm for particular historical periods may prevent critical insight and accurate perception. But if we are to learn from our history, if we are to build on that which has preceded us, the dangers must be faced and the task must be done.

The startling fact about Mumford's own historical reading is that out of the fantastically large historical scope available to him, when he turns to history for guidance he pays particular attention to two periods of very limited duration--that of Athens between 480-430 B.C., and Nineteenth Century New England between the years 1830 to 1860. That he does not do this to the exclusion of other sources is quite evident. In fact,

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[183]Lewis Mumford, Sticks and Stones (New York: Dover Press, 1955), p. 195.

[184]Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 13.

one of the most distinctive qualities of his writing is his attempt to absorb and synthesize whatever experience presents itself to him. But over and over again in his writing he states that if one wishes to move toward renewal he must pay particular attention to ancient Athens and to the Nineteenth Century New England transcendentalists. In the same way that the Christian looks to a span of about thirty-two years in early Palestine for insight into the historical process, Mumford looks to Athens and Nineteenth Century New England. He believes that these periods, despite their partialities, point beyond themselves to the possibility of transformed men and transformed society. I will sketch Mumford's analysis of these periods because in the process those values which Mumford finds necessary if man is to be renewed will be seen. At the same time, the changing influence of particular historic figures and modes of thought on Mumford's position should also become clear.

"Between the Eighth and the Sixth Centuries B.C. a new urban fabric began to knit together over the Aegean."[185] This development was distinguished from those of Mesopotamia and Egypt, Mumford states, in that the Greeks, at least to some degree, had freed themselves from "the outrageous fantasies of unqualified power" fostered by Bronze Age religion and Iron Age technology. They built their cities to human proportions and because of an enlightened political structure protected themselves from the paranoid claims of quasi-divine monarchs and the accompanying compulsions and regimentations of militarism and bureaucracy. Further, because the Greeks had not succumbed to hard caste and occupa-

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[185]Mumford, The City in History, p. 124.

tional divisions, they had the flexibility and inventiveness of the amateur. Central to the Greek city was its constant rotation of human functions and civic duties coupled with full citizenship participation in the polis. Unburdened by a high level of material goods, a new kind of economy of abundance arose in which virgin territories of mind and spirit were cultivated. The result was both a torrential outpouring of ideas and images in the arts and humanities and a level of collective life never before achieved.

Immediately, we are aware of themes important to Mumford: (1) the need for built-in restraints against the corruptions of unqualified power, both in terms of personal discipline and social structure; (2) the importance of moving beyond occupational specialisms to a vision of and participation in the broader community and its purposes; and (3) a limitation of one aspect of life, specifically material goods, to the end that more time and effort is freed for other pursuits. Mumford contends that, in contrast to our present situation, the Greeks, to some degree at least, had incorporated each of these qualities into their common life so that:

> Within a couple of centuries the Greeks discovered more about the nature and potentialities of man than the Egyptians or the Sumerians seem to have discovered in many millenia. All these achievements were concentrated in the Greek polis, and in particular, in the greatest of these cities, Athens.[186]

In the Fifth Century, due to a series of unique developments, the Greek city reached its maturity culturally and it is on this period that our discussion will concentrate. Three new institutions--the gymnasium, the sanatorium, and the theater--were formulated in this period, institutions which Mumford contends gave promise of creating the basis for more

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[186] Ibid., p. 125.

universal forms. He develops their importance and the impact they had on the emerging polis before proceeding to analyze the achievements and unrealized potentialities of the Fifth Century Greek city. The gymnasium grew out of the center at Olympia, the sanatorium out of Delphi, and the theater out of Cos. Though these centers were outside the larger urban areas, their inherent magnetism was such that men sought them out for nurture and revitalization. After such a visit, one returned to the larger centers with his parochialism challenged and his vision broadened. The vigorous religious, political, literary, and athletic life of the Greek citizen was nourished continuously by these three remarkable institutions. Indeed, Mumford believes that the chief distinction between Greek urban culture and that of its predecessors is the fact that Greece had Olympia, Delphi, and Cos.[187]

"Olympia stood for the body as the active physical expression, through disciplined play, of the human spirit."[188] Although later Greek dualism denied the significance of the body, the Classic Greeks never made this error. For them, spiritual and physical development were made of the same cloth. The Olympic Games, founded in 776 B.C., continued uninterrupted for almost a thousand years. Mumford believes it is of significance that these games began in little Olympia, the home of the gods, rival to the mountain in the north where the Olympian family originated. This origin points to the fact that games and contests have a religious genesis, if not always an immediate religious outlet.

At Olympia "the cities met, so to say, in person."[189] The games brought together not only athletes but poets. Gradually, the gymnasium,

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[187] Ibid., pp. 133-135. [188] Ibid., p. 136. [189] Ibid., p. 138.

an enclosed sports-ground, appeared in which all manners of athletic competitions were conducted. Since the Olympic principle provided that the mind be not left apathetic and idle by over-attention to physical exercise, this center was also equipped with classrooms. This latter provision proved singularly productive because one can trace the origin of three famous schools of learning--the Lyceum, the Academy, and the Cynosarges--to three different gymnasiums. Here, also, as everywhere in the Greek city were statues of the gods and heroes which set public esthetic standards. This plastic art greatly influenced images of bodily grace and beauty in the minds of Greek young people in the same way that contemporary media influence American youth today. Before the Olympic games were corrupted by "sordid professionalism and commercialism," the sense of sportsmanship engendered by them had a positive effect not only on the relationship between individuals but between cities. Mumford cites the "war" between Chalcis and Eretia in the Seventh Century in which hurled missiles, spears, slings, and arrows were barred. The influence of the gymnasium had caused these cities to emerge from "the barbarous depravity of total war" and sublimate brutal aggression.[190] He concludes his discussion of the Olympic Games by stating that their role in an increasingly urbanized society was that of continuing "many salutary country pastimes and vigorous bodily occupations." The spiritual by-products of this were as important as those to one's physical health. For it was in this setting that the old and the young could meet, not in an authoritarian relationship but a dialogic one, led but not dominated by elders.

Mumford's positive response to the gymnasium is a recognition

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[190] Ibid., pp. 138-139.

that the human person is a totality and that to nourish one aspect of this totality at the expense of the other is self-defeating. One's mental processes are hampered when one's body is neglected because of the intimate relationship between physical and mental well-being. The healthy body is at one and the same time the enabler of vigorous mental activity and the vehicle through which this activity is expressed. Conversely, to develop one's body at the expense of mind is to lose contact with those aspects of human personality which lead to further human transformation. Any society which is to renew itself, Mumford implies, will develop its own gymnasiums where individuals, in communal fashion, can develop their physical and mental faculties to their utmost. At its best, the public school would perform this function in our society. Unfortunately, however, the contemporary public school leaves much to be desired.

In Green Memories, a biography of his son, it becomes clear that Mumford's home in the rural village of Amenia, N.Y., provided for him and his growing family what the ancient Greek gymnasium had done for the inhabitants of the Greek polis--a relaxed setting in which one could develop deep and abiding ties with one's neighbors, in which space was available to develop one's body through vigorous bodily exercise, and in which time was available for reflection on life's meaning. The book abounds with examples of intimate and moving neighborly relationships, father-son competitions, and home-spun philosophic discussions among all concerned. The fact, however, that Mumford lives only part of any given year in Amenia and the other part in the city of New York is also revealing. The gymnasium is not the end of life or all that life has to offer. Instead, it is the place where one prepares himself to meet and hopefully overcome the frustrations, challenges, problems, and opportunities of the polis.

Delphi, Mumford states, "represented through its oracle the combination of the unconscious, in its depths, accessible through darkness, sleep, drugs, intoxication, with an open-eyed intelligence and a far-seeing providence."[191] Its twin gods were Apollo and Dionysus. Though the cult of Dionysus may have arisen from many sources, it is perhaps with the sanction of Delphi that the drama captured the Greek city. Drama arose out of religious festivals which had long been performed in the village; and significantly enough, the priests from the temple occupied the front row. The Attic comedy grew out of old fertility rites rooted in the neolithic past, while tragedy wrestled with the continuing problems of the human condition--those of fate, chance, and free will. It may be, Mumford states, that plays were first performed in the agora on improvised grandstands of wood, but soon the theater established itself on a slope on the outskirts of the city under the open sky. Unfortunately, as the Greek city developed, the drama sloughed off both sides of its religious heritage, both Apollo and Dionysus, so that mere cerebral amusement replaced bawdy rites and horseplay as well as solemn edification. A sense of the cosmic perspective was lost.

> At the very moment its pride and confidence became overweening, the human self began to shrivel. Cut off from its sense of the cosmic and the divine, it seemed more and more a prey to meaningless change and external caprice.[192]

Thus, one can see symbolized in the development of the drama, the course of urban development--the displacement of the sacraments of birth, citizenship, vocation, marriage and death by the vulgar, the trivial, and the spectacular. But even in its post-tragic phase, the theater remained one

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[191] Ibid., p. 136.

[192] Ibid., p. 140.

of the major distinguishing works of the classic city, reaching to the most distant cities of the empire. It was in the theater that the Greek came to know himself--his weaknesses, his sin, but also his great potentiliaties. Through drama, an awakened urban minority came to "self-consciousness and self-realization, even self-transcendence."[193]

It is precisely this sense of self-transcendence which Mumford feels needs to be recaptured today. For to a far greater degree than the ancient Greek, modern man has cut himself off from participation in cosmic purposes larger than his own limited existence and thus is in danger of losing himself. At the same time that not only philosophy but also much contemporary theology is turning away from reflection on man's continuing relationship to some all-encompassing reality, Mumford has been moving in precisely the opposite direction. Interestingly enough, this direction has been primarily influenced by his expanded reading in the historic religious traditions. Thus, while much contemporary religious thought, particularly that of the Christian faith, is consciously relinquishing its tie to the transcendent, one who began his career as a thorough-going humanist is searching diligently for ways in which man can rerelate to it. Unfortunately, as we shall see, he has not yet adequately related this developing concept of the transcendent to his program for personal renewal.

He is convinced that in the same way that Greek society had the ancient theater to lengthen its perspective, our present society needs similar institutions which point contemporary man beyond his immediate needs and satisfactions to his questioning about his place in the larger

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[193] Ibid.

scheme. For without this continuing stimulation, which comes primarily through great drama, philosophy, and the religious tradition, men shrivel into insignificance. For to live without at least some recognition of an ultimate purpose is no life at all. After man's stomach has been filled, after he has been placed in a suitable dwelling, after his children's wants have been provided for, what then? Greek drama, at its best, sought to answer this question for its own day. An urgent question is: Who will answer it for our own?

The drama had more immediate practical significance for Greek city development. The Greeks, as other earlier cultures, looked upon the founding of cities as religious acts. Thus, Delphi naturally assumed charge of the new foundations. Especially in the early period of colonization, the Pythian Apollo gave advice that dispatched new colonies in every direction, under the aegis of Apollo himself.

> Thus, at a moment when the growth of population might have led to congestion within the city, to random emigration, or to conflicts for arable land in the more densely populated regions, Delphi, willy-nilly, faced the population problem and conducted a program of organized dispersal.[194]

In this way, Delphi helped lessen the bitter economic competition and wars of conquest, while at the same time spreading Greek culture and the Greek polis to the thinly settled village communities on the perimeter. This control of city growth by orderly colonization was the first practical recognition of an organic limit to city growth; and during the century when it was most widely practiced under the control of a working norm, Mumford contends that the Greek city represents an ideal model environment for healthy human development. He is careful to point out that

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[194] Ibid., pp. 140-141.

this colonization movement was accomplished not by coercion but by religious persuasion and voluntary action. This theme of the need to establish limits to city development in order that cities conform to human dimensions is one of the major continuing emphases in Mumford's thought. He contends that after cities reach a certain point in population they must either sub-divide or move toward disintegration. His proposal is for a new regionalism based on groupings of self-contained cities. The individual cities would cooperate with each other but retain their self-identity. Because of the self-imposed limits, no city would be allowed to grow beyond a size which could involve its members intimately in its governmental and other communal affairs. Critics through the years have derided this proposal as so utopian that it should not be taken seriously. However, as one views the rapid disintegration of major metropolitan areas and hears increasingly the phrase, "New York may well be an ungovernable city," it may be that Mumford, the so-called dreamer, is closer to reality than his more obvious pragmatic foes.

Van R. Halsey, Jr. made this same point a few years ago at the time Mumford's monumental book, The City in History, was published. He stated:

> If some of Mumford's critics claim that he is still dispensing Emersonian pieties about wholeness and the good life to a world too cynical to listen, so be it. Mumford has here demonstrated what can happen to civilizations which ignore these lessons.[195]

In the first chapter of this statement it was asserted that a serious danger on the present theological scene is a strong tendency among contemporary theologians to accept modern man's present definition

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[195]Van R. Halsey, Jr., Review of The City in History by Lewis Mumford, The New Republic, CXLIV, (April 24, 1961), p. 25.

of himself as normative and to begin the theological task from that base. This appears to be true also in terms of the social institutions which contemporary man has created. In chapter two of The Secular City entitled "The Shape of the Secular City," Harvey Cox sets out to depict his analysis of the contemporary American city. In this chapter he finds two characteristic components of the social shape of the modern metropolis: anonymity and mobility. After briefly recognizing the dangers which anonymity presents, Cox proceeds in very incisive fashion to point up its positive characteristics. "Urban anonymity need not be heartless. Village sociability can mask a murderous hostility."[196] "Urban man...wants to maintain a clear distinction between private and public."[197] He defends his argument theologically by viewing anonymity as deliverance from the law. In the historical process man meets the One who calls him into being as a free deciding self, and becomes aware that neither his past history nor his environment determines what he does. Anonymity becomes for Cox the way in which modern man experiences both the terror and delight of human freedom because he is no longer subject to the social pressures of town life. The law then "includes any cultural phenomenon which holds man in immaturity, in captivity to convention and tradition," in this case the fishbowl of town life. The Gospel "is the activity of God creating new possibilities in history," that is, the anonymity which the city provides.

> From this perspective, urbanization can be seen as a liberation from some of the cloying bondages of preurban society. It is the chance to be free. Urban man's deliverance from enforced conventions makes it necessary to choose for himself.[198]

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[196] Cox, The Secular City, p. 45.

[197] Ibid., p. 46.

[198] Ibid., p. 41.

Mobility, a second major component of the secular city, is also seen in a positive light. "An advanced industrial society strangles without mobility....Those tendencies in our society which tend to retard or discourage mobility almost always arise from people who are trying to prevent other people from enlarging their share of the power or the rewards of the society."[199] Again, Cox places this argument in a theological context by distinguishing between Jahveh and the Baalim. Jahveh was "not spatially placed" but the Baalim were. The latter were "the proprietors of certain activities or more frequently of particular towns and places."[200] The Hebrew people were nomads, continual pilgrims. "Jesus, in the same tradition," says Cox, "constantly rejected spatial motifs. His ascension in its simplest terms means that Jesus is mobile."[201] Finally, the Christian community at its best has been a traveling community, "the People of the Way." The mobile man...

> is less tempted than the immobile man to demote Jahveh into a Baal. He will usually not idolatrize any town or nation. He will not be as likely to see the present economic and political structure as the unambigous expression of how things always have been and always should be....There is no reason why Christians should deplore the accelerating mobility of the modern metropolis.[202]

In sum, Cox, choosing anonymity and mobility as the two central characteristics of the modern metropolis, affirms them and formulates a theological stance in support of this affirmation.

One can agree with Cox that healthy ingredients in human life include a certain measure of anonymity and the broadening of one's perspective which a degree of mobility brings. He can agree further with many of the criticisms of town life which Cox makes. But this does not mean,

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[199] Ibid., p. 54.

[200] Ibid., p. 55.

[201] Ibid., p. 57.

[202] Ibid., p. 58.

as Cox appears to believe, that the only alternative then becomes that presented by megalopolis as it has emerged over the past several decades. Cox appears to be guilty of what one might call an either-or mentality which assumes that one either totally accepts the new world of the city or retreats into an unreal world of the past. Further, his theological defense of the city is weakened because one wonders if the theology being espoused is mere apologia for an existing situation. For not only does it appear rather arbitrary to choose anonymity and mobility as the two central characteristics of the city at the expense of other possibilities, but to identify them so sharply with central Biblical themes is highly questionable. One thinks, for example, of the American pioneer. He was certainly the most mobile and anonymous of men. Always on the move in search of new horizons, he and his family often lived alone and anonymously in the midst of a hostile wilderness. Yet, historians, while not blind to his virtues, are pointing out increasingly that the pioneer was far from being a mature man. He raped the wilderness, shamelessly stole the virgin land from its original inhabitants, and in the process sowed the seeds of a national violence which continues to tear the fabric of our national life. There appears to be a strong possibility, at least, that the mobility and anonymity typical of our current urban scene might be resulting in similar consequences. To equate anonymity with gospel and mobility with smashing of idols is much too simple an identification of the Christian Gospel and the contemporary world.

To be sure, a theology is to be developed in correlation with the world it inhabits; but when the world dictates not only agenda but answers as well, the theology is vitiated. Richard Niebuhr warned us decades ago in his book Christ and Culture that there is a great chasm be-

tween a theology of the world and a theology which seeks to transform it. As the cities of our nation move toward chaos, this admonition takes on added significance.

The Christian's stance in society is always a precarious one. He is called to affirm the world in which he lives but not accept it as it is. Instead, his role is that of envisioning what it can be. Insofar as our urban culture is concerned today, there is no more important task confronting Christians and other concerned men and women than this. In the present disillusionment, people are more ready to listen than they have been for a long time. Concrete proposals which can catch the imagination are desperately needed. The Urban Prospect, Mumford's most recent book, published in the spring of 1968, contains such proposals.

The importance of the cloister looms large in Mumford's prescriptions for contemporary society. He sees it as representing an increasingly necessary aspect of human life in a society which presents little opportunity for privacy. Using Toynbee's phrase, "withdrawal and return," he sees the cloister as that part of the life rhythm in which one gathers the inner forces which he then uses to mold a better social life. In the cloister, one broods, plumbs his memory, and stimulates his imagination so that his social involvement will have renewed meaning.[203] Mumford believes that at Cos this function of the cloister may have escaped the confines of the temple for the first time. Actually, the influence of the cloister on Mumford's thought probably comes more directly from the life of the Benedictine monastery than from Cos. But whatever the source,

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[203]Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 387.

what it represents for the fulfillment of human life in our time is of utmost significance. It has particular relevance for the contemporary Christian church, as anyone who has been personally involved in the church's life knows all too well. The church reflects many signs of renewal in the past few decades, particularly evidenced by its increasing social involvement. But some of us are now concerned that this involvement is becoming involvement for involvement's sake. One's need to be where the action is appears to be assuming a compulsion for many churchmen so that the perspective needed for an incisive and critical stance is being lost. Much energy is being lost and funds wasted because ill-informed programs have been begun without the necessary reflection. Reaction to a plethora of symptoms is replacing definitive action against root causes. This is especially sad because of the limited availability of funds and personnel which exist. New mechanisms are needed in the life of the church so that the continuing cycle of withdrawal and return can be achieved both in the life of individual members and the life of the church itself.

As was true for Delphi, Cos had some immediate practical consequences. It and its counterparts at Cnidus and Epidauros were instrumental in laying out important elements in town planning. The Hippocratic treatise on "Air, Water, and Places" laid down the outlines of public hygiene in relation to the choice of sites and the planning of cities. This work and others like it recognized the importance of orienting buildings and city streets to evade the summer sun and catch the cooling winds, of avoiding marshy lands and unsanitary surroundings and procuring pure sources of water. These insights were of great significance for city development. Unfortunately, however, since it was easier for the

wealthy and the leisured to visit a distant sanatorium when ill than for a city to provide the capital to build the necessary structures, often the physician's insights were slow in being adopted. Thus, Hippocratic theory did not become urban practice until the new Hellenistic cities were built, first in Greece and then in Roman colonization towns.[204]

Such then were the contributions which the gymnasium, the theater, and the sanatorium made to the Greek city and potentially to all succeeding urban life. Mumford closes his discussion of these institutions by stressing one final contribution they made to the life of cities. He contends that they introduced a motive for wider circulation and cultural interchange by travel and pilgrimmage. For those who visited Olympia, Delphi, and Cos had temporarily detached themselves from the self-enclosed polis and had become, by a vivid attraction, participants in a more-inclusive unity, one visually symbolized by the sacred roads leading to Delphi.

Potentially, these practices laid the groundwork for a new form of urban polity based on federated organization and operating over wider areas through voluntary transactions and mutual services. Greek theory, however, lagged behind its practice and continued to emphasize "the separate, the particular, the static, the archaic, and neglected the new tendencies toward dynamic cultural intercourse and political federation."[205] Mumford notes that despite the fact that Greece had produced twenty such confederations before Rome destroyed the last vestige of Greek freedom, scholars as eminent as Aristotle paid little attention to these and their potentialities. Possibly the earliest federal state in

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[204]Mumford, The City in History, pp. 141-142. [205]Ibid., p. 143.

Greece was the Boeotian Confederacy (447-386 B.C.) which achieved a high degree of representative federal government; combining city union and local autonomy. This was a political achievement of no mean magnitude. Ultimately, however, it failed because of an act entitled the "King's Peace" of 386 which stipulated that Greek cities were to be "free." Under Spartan rule this really meant that cities were not free to join together in federal union. The collapse of the Boeotian Confederacy anticipated other similar misfortunes so that, unfortunately, the concept of a federated urban policy never was given the opportunity to create a radically new pattern of civic life. But the contributions of Olympia, Delphi, and Cos--though finally frustrated in this setting--were to continue to be of benefit to those later influenced by Greek life and thought.[206]

We turn now to the specific period which Mumford sees as crucial --that of Athens between the years 480-430 B.C. For he contends that in this brief period of approximately fifty years, the Greek polis was such that it produced outstanding men to a degree surpassing all previous and, with the possible exception of renaissance Florence, all succeeding urban constellations. It was the result of a development beginning in the Sixth and Seventh Centuries, incorporating the strengths of Olympia, Delphi, and Cos. A new man, the free citizen, emerged from it. This citizen, possessing as birthright all that the city possessed, owed nothing to princely favor or to his economic or official function but resumed the place he once held in ancient village culture before this culture was overwhelmed by the developing cities--"that of being first of all a man,

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[206] Ibid., pp. 143-144.

endowed with every human dimension, to whom every part of life was open and accessible."[207] This, at least, was the ideal. Though never fully actualized, we measure the Greek polis not by its failure, he says, but instead by its capacity to at least formulate and in a limited number of instances to manifest the ideal.

The city which helped bring the ideal citizen into existence was far from ideal physically. Its core was the Acropolis, the home of the city's gods. Here were all the holy offices derived from nature and history. Gathered together on the Acropolis are the true sources of the ancient city, "from paleolithic spring and cave to neolithic wall and sacred temple, from protected camp and village to the proud and powerful city."[208] It was a unique combination, Mumford states, of natural advantages and man-made artifacts.

Through the Acropolis, Athens retained continuing contact with its primitive foundations. Athens made use of the myths, the tragic dramas, and the architectural order of the Acropolis in which the aboriginal rocks show no sign of having ever been covered over, except by buildings. The fact that the deepest primitive sources and the highest esthetic expressions were united on the Acropolis explains to a great degree both the life of the city below and the form which this life gave to its buildings.

Mumford contrasts this basis for city life with the typical contemporary city, which he sees as a model not of form but of formlessness. Probably the classic example of this latter phenomenon is Los Angeles, at which one looks in vain for any rational coherence. Los Angeles seems to

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[207] Ibid., p. 160.

[208] Ibid., p. 161.

have sprung up without reason, to have grown without reason, and to have no movement toward which its life is oriented other than formless expansion. But Mumford sees the same phenomonen happening to practically every major city and other smaller cities insofar as these latter emulate the larger metropolises. Caught up in an expansionist mentality, measuring success in terms of expanding census figures and rising land values, they are rapidly losing any relationship to their historical rootage and any common basis for urban life other than individual and corporate profit. Since Athens' communal life centered on the images cast by its gods, each individual and the community as a whole were constantly confronted with a representation of eternal values and a revelation of divine possibilities. The modern city, lacking this confrontation, lives in a value vacuum now rapidly being filled with men and institutions intoxicated by power. Mumford concludes The City in History by stating that "the sterile gods of power, unrestrained by organic limits or human goals," unless rapidly checked, "will remake man in their own faceless image and bring human history to an end."[209] Ancient Athens had these restraints by way of its gods. The contemporary city must find criteria of its own by which men might grow in stature, and then pour these criteria "into fresh civic, regional, and planetary molds."[210] When we discuss Mumford's analysis of the ideal Greek citizen, we will begin to become aware of what he regards as adequate criteria.

As soon as one speaks of criteria, however, he is in danger of misinterpreting Mumford's stance. The criteria one uses in seeking form is not to be drawn from any ideological system and then imposed upon a

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[209] Ibid., p. 576. [210] Ibid., p. 575.

man and a society. Instead, the criteria arise out of a deeper understanding of what it means to be a person, insights derived from new perceptions into the nature of the organism and of ecological processes in biology, new appreciation of the pre-rational and unconscious and self-determined elements in human behavior and the emergence of new thinking which understands and incorporates both causal sequences and purposeful goals. It is on the basis of these insights which come out of reflection and experimentation on the nature of the human personality that criteria for a common social life will emerge in and of themselves. However, detailed discussion of this positive statement must be postponed until a later point in this thesis. We must return now to Mumford's discussion of ancient Athens.

To all outward appearances, Mumford states, the city which lay below the Acropolis seemed an unlikely setting for the development of greatness. In fact, the impression one received upon first entering it was such that Dicaearchus, even later than the Fifth Century, could observe that "on his first arrival a stranger would hardly believe that this is the Athens of which he has heard so much."[211] Housing was mediocre, streets were unpaved and laid out with no over-all governing pattern, and sanitary facilities were far from adequate. The available evidence seems to depict a scary picture of a great city "until we remember that we are dealing with a people unfettered by many other standard requirements of civilization...."[212] Mumford contends that since the citizens of Athens were not overly occupied with matters of lesser significance, they had the opportunity to occupy their hours with life's higher pursuits. The

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[211] Ibid., p. 163.

[212] Ibid., p. 165.

Greek citizen had mastered Emerson's secret: Save on the low levels and spend on the high ones. This is another way of saying that the Greek city had mastered its priorities. Given the limited amount of time and resources available to it, it had consciously chosen to pursue particular aspects of life rather than others. A fundamental question for contemporary American society is: On what basis can priorities be established in mid-Twentieth Century America? To a great degree, all of Mumford's writing is an attempt to answer that question. He contends that contemporary priorities will remain out of kilter so long as our understanding of the meaning and purpose of human life is so terribly distorted.

Mumford sees the ideal Greek citizen embodied in the lives of figures such as Aristides, Aeschylus, Themistocles, Thucydides, Euripides, Plato, and above all Sophocles and Socrates. These men and others produced one of the few mutations in the history of Western thought for in them a new concept of human balance and wholeness had taken shape, one which influenced not only other Greek citizens but every succeeding historical period since. Mumford, in describing the significance of the life of Albert Schweitzer in another context, describes as well his understanding of the ideal Greek citizen's contribution when he states: "...he deliberately reduced the intensive cultivation of any one field, in order to expand the contents and significance of his life as a whole."[213] This sentence further points up the unity of Mumford's life and thought because his decision to become a "generalist" arose out of the same conviction.

For Mumford, Sophocles was the ideal Athenian citizen in that he represented the antithesis of the "specialist," the typical contemporary

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[213]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 209.

man. Sophocles resisted the temptation to live a partial existence, to fill but one tiny role at the expense of all others, and to serve with blind antlike devotion the needs of the hive. Rather, he made himself at home in all aspects of the Greek experience-- leader of the dance, skilled in war, tragedian. He was equal to every occasion, and willing to assume moral responsibility for his acts, even when opposed by the entire community. Socrates, too, represented the best that Athens produced, In his person, as in Sophocles, unity of personality was achieved. He was capable of being a stone cutter at the same time that he "was a doughty soldier and a supreme teacher."[214] An athlete among athletes, a soldier among soldiers, and a thinker among thinkers, he was at home in every part of the polis. In these men no aspect of their lives was removed or segregated from any other. Each flowed into all others, enriched them and was enriched by them.

That this understanding of human life is central to Mumford's prescription for contemporary man is evident in one of his essays on the purposes of education, in which he appeals to contemporary educators to cease producing men of great expertise in an increasingly specialized area in favor of the balanced man, "capable of facing life on many fronts, ready for any emergency, moving freely from one sphere of activity to another...."[215] Also, this was the goal toward which he moved in his own efforts throughout his many years of teaching. Interestingly enough, the most creative recent developments in higher education are following this lead. Until very recently, the major thrust of higher education in this

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[214]Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 21.

[215]Mumford, Values for Survival, p. 177.

country has been the development of specialists, extremely competent in a very limited field but with little competence or concern beyond it. Individuals have increasingly locked themselves into their own disciplines so that the term "university" has ceased to carry any real meaning. This is now being challenged on many fronts by sensitive men who are becoming increasingly aware of their broader responsibilities for their society. Many are insisting that in some way disciplines have to relate to each other. The concept of particular knowledge for its own sake is under attack.

An interesting experiment being carried out by Antioch College on the island of Kauai is a good example of this new direction. The purpose of the experiment is to use the combined talents of students and faculty from a variety of fields in order to strengthen and develop the organic, social, and political life of that island. In order to do this, however, each person involved is forced to look beyond his own specialty to see how this specialty can contribute to a larger whole. In other words, he is being forced to become a generalist, or, perhaps better, he is forced to place his specialty in the service of broader community goals. Antioch's hope is that its faculty and students will come away from this educational experiment better able to face life on many fronts. This experiment is a concrete example of Mumford's hope for the educational process.

Central to the life of the Greek citizen in the polis was the balance in the citizen's life between his public and private life, his willingness to take responsibility for the life of the city. Mumford follows Fowler in emphasizing that much of the activity of the city now done by paid employees was performed by ordinary citizens. In an essay written in 1939 entitled, "The Social Responsibilities of Teachers," Mumford contends

that in a sound community, public life will necessarily embrace a third of a citizen's waking life.[216] Further, almost every male Athenian was required to take part in public business, as a member of the assembly, and in seeing that the decisions of that body were properly carried out. Participation in the arts was also central to the citizen's life. The vigorous dramatic life of the city is indicated by the fact that, according to Ferguson, in the one hundred years of the empire, two thousand plays of picked quality were written and staged in Athens and six thousand new musical compositions were created and presented. Such activities demanded that every year approximately two thousand Athenians were directly involved in preparing themselves for participation in the esthetic life of the city.

Through this constant citizen involvement in the arts and politics of the city, Athens largely overcame the city's original vices, "its one-man rule, its segregation of activities, its occupational narrowness... its bureaucratization--and they had done this for at least a generation without forfeiting skill or lowering the standard of excellence."[217] For a short period of time, city and citizen were one. No part of the city's life was foreign to its citizenry. Education of the whole man for life in the polis, he concludes, has never again been equalled in another city of comparable size.

The recent cries of many in the ghettos of our great cities for what is called "participatory democracy" reflect, at least to some degree, a concern for the form of life which Mumford sees as manifested in ancient Athens. A major difference, however, in this area between Mumford and

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[216] Ibid., p. 160.

[217] Mumford, The City in History, p. 168.

the advocates of "participatory democracy" is that whereas the majority of the latter believe that such government can be achieved without radical changes in the current size of cities, Mumford is more radical and contends that real citizen participation cannot come about until the size and population of cities is reduced to manageable proportions.

It is beyond the scope of this essay to develop the many reasons behind the demise of the Greek polis at the very moment when it appeared ready for greater actualization. Mumford mentions a number of factors: the unreadiness to control the processes of economic expansion, the inability to form lasting political alliances, the withdrawal of the elite into a kind of polis within the polis, the inability to forge any ideal goal beyond itself, and, of course, the Peloponnesian War. But one central reason for decay, according to him, and the one which he feels has the most direct implications for our current crisis situation, is the fact that the Greek polis, in his words, regressed into utopia. Crucial to this development is the figure of Plato, whose early influence on Mumford's thought has appeared to wane with each succeeding year of Mumford's life. The early influence is indicated in a statement in an essay entitled, "A New York Adolescence." He states that as a New York cub reporter, while still in his teens, he whiled away the lonely hours of the night by reading Plato or William James.[218] Though Mumford can still say in 1962 that he both loves Plato and hates him, it is difficult to find anything of substance in his work by this time that reflects a continuing Platonic influence.[219]

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[218]Mumford, The Human Prospect, p. 56.

[219]Mumford, The City in History, p. 173.

The purpose of the Greek utopians, that of outlining the nature of a rational ideal commonwealth, reflected an increasing confidence that human reason could impose measure and order on all human activities. Whereas the earlier polis was intimately tied to the earth and to its past, the utopians proposed to break these ties and begin anew on a more rational, coherent basis. One can compare this approach to that of most contemporary city planning. Both reflect an over-confidence in man's intellect and a mistaken stripping away of all those elements of human nature not amenable to reason. The utopians were not fully enough aware, as were individuals such as Paul of Tarsus and Ignatius of Loyola, that reason alone is insufficient either to define man or to cure a society's ills. In fact, Mumford states, if not accompanied by other insights into the human condition reason will simply serve to aggravate these ills.[220]

Plato's particular structural scheme, as developed in The Republic, demonstrates a profound misunderstanding of the conditions under which human nature is most apt to unleash its innate potentialities. His prescription for goodness was to lay out a perfect constitution and then, by means of guardians, enforce it with kindly ruthlessness. The dangers inherent in such a restrictive and authoritarian approach to government have become abundantly clear in the Twentieth Century. Plato failed to recognize that growth does not occur in such an atmosphere but rather in one in which freedom for self-direction can occur. True maturation is self-maturation, not imposed from without. It is the maturation which comes from the very kind of polis Plato was unfortunately seeking to replace. Failing to understand this, he became, for all his genius, a pro-

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[220]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, pp. 244-246.

to-Fascist, "believing in the rulership of an elite, in using lies to facilitate government, in valuing military regimentation, and in many other...horrifying respects."[221]

Mumford states that the rise of Soviet Russia, Fascist Italy and Nazi Germany represent modern and magnified versions of "the kind of totalitarian state that Plato had depicted."[222] In fact, their rise, at least for Mumford, signaled a basic shift in his understanding of utopias in general and Plato's version in particular. He states that Bertrand Russell first made this discovery on a visit to the Soviet Union in the Twenties. This was almost twenty years before Richard Crossman and others began to contend that The Republic, far from being a desirable model, was the prototype of the Fascist states, "even though neither Hitler nor Mussolini nor yet Stalin exactly qualified for the title of Philosopher-King."[223]

Intimately related to this totalitarian scheme was Plato's call for occupational specialization, a proposed ideal, again, ironically enough, totally at odds with the society which had nurtured him. Mumford states that if the social order Plato constructed in The Republic had been in existence in the time of Socrates, the supposed architect of the Republic, Socrates himself could not have existed. For once having been apprenticed to the art of stonecutting, Socrates would have remained in this position the remainder of his life. Further, he would have turned over his period of active military service as a citizen soldier to a

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[221] Mumford, The Story of Utopias, p. 4.

[222] Mumford, "Utopia, The City and the Machine," Daedalus, p. 272.

[223] Ibid.

lifetime military professional, and finally he would not have dared "to match his wits against the best minds of his day, in a pedagogical role so different from that of a stonecutter."[224]

In the development of his so-called ideal community, Plato observed accurately that the inequality of innate skills provided a basis for vocational specialization making for interdependence. But he gratuitously moved from this recognition of obvious human differences to the conclusion that men should develop only that which seems most natural to them and even deepen original differences by a lifetime of occupational specialization. He neglected the fact that, as Dr. C. G. Jung has demonstrated in our time, a better life might result not from merely heightening those individual qualities which seem most natural to the person but in developing also the weaker functions. To do this is to escape the danger of pushing an asymmetrical development into a deeper form of organic disharmony.

> For Plato, wholeness and balance were not to be found in individual men, only in the hive. For the sake of the polis he was ready to sacrifice the life of the citizen: indeed, he was ready to sacrifice in the individual personality the admirable qualities that had begun to emerge from its life--harmony, moderation, poise, symmetry, organic balance.[225]

Whereas the polis which nurtured him existed for the sake of the citizen, Plato proposed that the citizen exist for the polis.

Finally, by trying to over-rationalize the polis, and give it an all-embracing and unchangable form, Plato neglected the very genius of the city--its potential for transcending any and all partial concretions. The city is a creative force insofar as it provides opportunities to re-

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[224] Mumford, The City in History, p. 175.

[225] Ibid., p. 174.

concile opposites, to create new syntheses, and elicit new purposes. Plato's static proposal in The Republic denied this. He, instead, returned the city to the order of an insect community whose social adaptations are sealed in biological structures which have remained unchanged for millenia. By overvaluing order, he forgot that the life of a city is not unchanging structure but incessant drama. Its main function is "the enlargement in human consciousness of the drama of life itself, through whose enactment existence discloses fresh meanings, not given by any momentary analysis or repetitious statistical order."[226] This dynamic quality of the city escaped Plato so that he was unable to leave room for change and transformation, the very nature of life.

The ultimate irony of Plato's utopia is that it is not really an imaginary projection at all. Instead, Mumford contends, Plato merely established a seemingly philosophic basis for the city as it had developed historically, particularly in Egypt and Mesopotamia, one reflecting absolute rulership, totalitarian coercion, permanent division of labor, constant readiness for war; in sum, a structure immune to challenge from within and to destruction from without. What he accomplished was to further undermine the one experiment in city self-governemt which, for all its problems, gave promise of further human development--the polis which had nurtured him. Apparently, Mumford continues, Plato knew too little history to realize that in turning his back on contemporary Athens he had retreated even further back than Sparta, "though he had to wait more than two thousand years before the development of a scientific technology would make his singularly inhumane ideals realizable."[227]

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[226] Ibid., p. 178.

[227] Mumford, "Utopia, The City and the Machine," Daedalus, p. 274.

This harsh judgment on Plato's thought, given with few qualifications, as it appears particularly in The City in History and "Utopia, The City and the Machine," contrasts sharply with an estimate made years before in The Story of Utopias. This contrast is worth developing, at least to a limited degree, because it reflects one of the most significant changes in the thought of one whose work, in general, has been remarkably consistent. Mumford partially acknowledges this shift in his thinking in a preface to the 1962 re-issuing of The Story of Utopias when he states that, under Plato's spell while a young man, he glossed over too lightly the "authoritarian nature of The Republic." However, the impression one receives when reading consecutively his passages on Plato's thought in The Story of Utopias, The Condition of Man, The City in History, and finally, "Utopia, The City and the Machine" which appeared in the spring, 1965 edition of Daedalus is that of a disenchantment even deeper in significance than that implied in the 1962 preface.

When one reads The Story of Utopias his distinct impression is the kinship which Mumford feels with Plato. For example, Mumford concludes his discussion of The Republic by stating appreciatively that in Plato's imagined community, servitude, compulsion, avarice, and indolence are gone and that men mind their business for the sake of living well. The implication is that this blissful state could become a reality if The Republic were actualized. Compare this judgment with his later judgments cited above. Again, in The Story of Utopias he seems to speak appreciatively throughout about the fact that almost all utopian schemes emphasize the factor of breeding--an alteration of individual physical and mental characteristics, through education, biological selection, and other means. In this way, those capable of disinterested leadership are

being created and sorted out from those fit to follow. Later in the book he talks positively of the possibility of using new biological developments to select and bring forth certain human traits and reduce or eliminate others.[228] Since writing these words his view of human nature has changed to the degree that no longer is he willing to trust the judgments of those who would make such decisions. Developments in totalitarian governments and more recently in so-called democratic governments and the evil inherent in men which resists educational correction have sobered his view mightily. He sees medical psychiatry, artificial insemination, and chemotherapy as potential and to some degree already actual instruments of great evil which must be resisted rather than encouraged.

Again, in The Story of Utopias, speaking of the communal life of the guardians of the state, he defends this by saying that whereas most people need a normal family life, it is necessary for those who have the capacity to strip themselves of family ties to serve the larger community; for, as he states, "the little utopia of the family is the enemy--indeed the principal enemy--of the beloved community."[229] Again, a basic change from this stance has occurred which we have already cited in the third chapter of this essay. Today, he sees the rehabilitation of the family as central to personal and social renewal. The family is not the enemy of the beloved community but instead a basic building block if this community is ever to be established.

In sum, when Mumford wrote The Story of Utopias he was an aristocrat in the tradition of The Republic. Writing in the mood of a bene-

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[228] Mumford, The Story of Utopias, section 4, chapter 1.

[229] Ibid., p. 50.

volent rationalism, he was willing to place the development of men and society in the hands of enlightened governors. Developments occurring shortly after The Story of Utopias was written changed this position quite quickly so that today he stands in a very different tradition--the democratic tradition of the Greek polis. He remains very interested in the development of the historic aristocratic virtues but wants these developed in all men rather than a selected few.

The second historical period which Mumford looks to for guidance in the development of a future integration is that between 1830 and 1860 in the United States--the period of Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, and Melville. In the Nineteen Twenties, Mumford ecstatically described this period as the birth of an imaginative New World, "a new hemisphere in the geography of the mind." He saw it as the climax of the American experience so that what preceded anticipated it and what followed dwindled away from it. It nourished men, he said, as no other period in America has before or since.[230] Subsequent decades have not diminished this estimate. In The Condition of Man (1944) and The Transformations of Man (1957) he contends that the above four men came closer to forming a new synthesis in the midst of an approaching barbarism than any other individual or group of individuals, and remarks that their insights will prove as significant for a new period of integration as were the insights of Plato and Aristotle in formulating into a philosophic stance the new truths of Christianity. Whitman's Democratic Vistas, he contends, will

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[230]Mumford, The Golden Day, pp. 42-43.

have particular significance in this respect.[231]

In Herman Melville, Mumford compares the North Atlantic states between the years 1820 and 1860 with Athens in the Fifth Century B.C., and finds the periods similar in a number of ways. In both instances "an old provincial culture bound to the land, was being overthrown by a new order based on trade and imperialistic enterprise and military expeditions in support of the prestige of the state,"[232] and in the brief historical moment when the new impinged upon the old to stimulate it but had not yet overwhelmed it, a new burst of creativity was made possible. The spirit drank from that which was valuable in the old culture plus that of the seething activities of the new. Ultimately, however, again in both instances, this new life was to prove inimical to that which preceded it so that in the brief span of years between Sophocles and Menander and Herman Melville and Mark Twain one can visualize the transformation from human fulfillment to barbarism.

As New England entered the Nineteenth Century, its inherited medieval civilization had become a shell, "but drying up, it left behind a sweet acrid aroma, and for a brief day it had more intense existence in the spirit."[233] Before its day had passed, it fulfilled itself in great acts of the imagination. The Puritan sired the Transcendentalist "and the will-to-power, which had made him what he was, with his firm but forbidding character, and his conscientious but narrow activity, gave way to the will-to-perfection."[234] The provincial culture against which the new

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[231]Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 382.

[232]Mumford, Herman Melville, p. 65.

[233]Mumford, The Golden Day, p. 41.

[234]Ibid., p. 41.

historical currents were moving was embodied in the towns and villages of colonial New England. This development, beginning in the Seventeenth Century, ran counter to the prevailing mood of European city life at the time and represented a continuation of the more open order of the medieval city. Central to the development of the New England town was its deliberate refusal to grow beyond the possibility of socializing and assimilating its members, thus bringing into existence a balance between rural and urban occupations as well as an internal balance of population and usable land.[235] In this setting a democratic polity and citizen participation, rarely achieved before or since, found expression.

Mumford states that the similarities between the New England village and the ancient Greek polis are striking. In both instances the religious rootage of the community was of central importance. This rootage dictated that the physical appearance and comforts of both were secondary to more central values. Indeed, as already noted, the absence of many accoutrements may well have contributed to the purity of vision concerning the basis on which the settlement was established. For as the accoutrements multiplied, the purity of vision appears to have suffered accordingly.

Another point of resemblance was the adherance to the principle of limits. Whenever a city had a sufficient number of members; that is, "when the land is fairly occupied, and when the addition of more land would unduly increase the hardship of working it from the town, or would spread out the farmers, and make it difficult for them to attend to their religious and civic duties, the original settlement throws out a new

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[235]Mumford, The City in History, pp. 331-332.

shoot."[236] Thus Charlestown spun off Woburg; Medfield, Dedham; and Nahant, Lynn. These communities knew and applied a principle which Aristotle had applied centuries earlier: the lesson of controlled growth. If a city overreaches the bounds of growth and absorbs more individuals than it can properly house, feed, govern, or educate, it ceases to be a city because its accelerating disorganization prohibits it from carrying on a city's functions. In this respect Aristotle's insight is sounder than almost all contemporary city planners who have not yet arrived at a functional definition of the city and who fail to recognize that size and area cannot be increased without limit, "without either destroying the city or bringing about a new kind of urban organization, for which both an adequate small scale form and large scale pattern of life must be found."[237]

Mumford sees a final point of resemblance between the Greek polis and the New England village in that all inhabitants of the New England village were co-partners in a corporation based on a common sense of the community's purpose and on a roughly equal division of the land into individual plots taken in freehold and a share of the six or more common fields. Membership in the community was closely guarded and the right of occupying and transferring the land was restricted. There were definite negative aspects to this system; but the positive side of such restrictions rested in the fact that in some instances the communities helped poorer members to build homes. Further, as a new member was voted into

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[236]Mumford, Sticks and Stones, p. 16.

[237]Mumford, The City in History, pp. 184-185.

the community, he was given as a gift an assigned number of lots.[238] This economic base was an obvious advantage to the citizen in establishing economic security.

The heart of the New England community was the commons around which the public buildings were erected: the meeting house, the town hall, and later the school. These institutions served as the rallying point for the community. By way of citizen participation in them the medieval ideal of self-government, so imperfectly fulfilled in Europe on account of the persistent opposition of lords, bishops, bourgeois magnates, was more perfectly achieved because "the protestant congregation had control of the church as well as the town."[239] Although the New England ideal of government was never perfectly manifested in any New England colonial community, its instincts were positive. Mumford contends that the sooner contemporary governmental thinking and city planning begin to take seriously the achievements and potential inherent in this form, the sooner will urban renewal be possible.

In the beginning decades of the Nineteenth Century, the provincial New England society was being challenged by the land pioneer and the industrial pioneer. Utilitarian man was making his appearance felt in the opening of the West and the building of the new industrial cities. The signs of an approaching barbarism were on the horizon. But despite this imminent danger, the predominant mood of the period was hope. England had its Carlyles and Ruskins but not America. Melville, writing in 1850, spoke for his countrymen when he said:

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[238] Mumford, Sticks and Stones, pp. 17-18.

[239] Mumford, The City in History, p. 331.

> We are the pioneers of the world; the advance guard, sent on through the wilderness of untried things, to break a path in the New World that is ours. In our youth is our strength; in our experience, our wisdom.[240]

The period was a challenge and, as in Greece, a number of men rose to meet it. Men such as Emerson, Thoreau, Whitman, and Melville stood between two worlds. Part of their experience, which Mumford calls their Protestantism, allowed for the critical examination of men, creeds, and institutions. But another part, that fed by the setting in which they were raised--"free institutions planted in an unpreempted soil"--led them toward new institutions, a new art, and a new philosophy on which a more encompassing society might be built.[241]

Mumford views Emerson as the central figure in this integration because he was the first American philosopher with a fresh doctrine. In him Mumford sees the living essence of New England--its strengths and its weaknesses--and in his life and thought the potentialities of New England were given expression. Central to his thought was the ability to get beyond the concretization of an idea in institution and ritual and to see it afresh in its nakedness. He divested every idea of its prior associations and attempted thereby to see how that idea could be re-related to his own life and his own experience. Therefore, each part of his past became available to him in a contemporaneous way and accepted or rejected accordingly.

The Emersonian attempt to live life "wholly from within" was applauded by Mumford, without reserve, in The Golden Day. He quotes with approval the famous Emerson passage in which Emerson justifies his "de-

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[240]Mumford, The Golden Day, p. 42. [241]Ibid., p. 44.

parture from the dear old doctrines of the Church in order to 'live wholly from within.'" On hearing this, a friend said to Emerson, "... these impulses may come from below, and not from above," who then replied, "...if I am the Devil's child, I will live then from the Devil." In the account, Emerson then comments, "No law can be sacred to me but that of my Nature."[242] Although he applauded this statement in The Golden Day, Mumford in later years has viewed it as naive. He has since learned that one's character is molded to a greater degree than Emerson realized, both consciously and sub-consciously, by the environment in which he has been reared. In "The Uprising of Caliban," for example, written in 1954, he specifically saw Emerson as naive on this very issue. He claims that Emerson failed to take account of the fact that what he felt was a purely spontaneous and unlearned reaction to events was, in fact, the reaction of one who was the fifth in an unbroken line of clergymen whose superego had been thoroughly formed in the image of God.[243]

But despite this criticism, Mumford continues to draw strength from Emerson's doctrine of self-reliance because he believes it helps point men toward life's unrealized potentialities. Emerson's approach, he believes, was the answer of the transplanted European, who, in a day of great expectation, renounced the backward glance in hope of a better future. Since the mind was inexhaustible, it was only the unimaginative practical men who were content to live in the given and it was the pioneer of the mind who was willing to rethink his past in order to create a new world. Emerson was unwilling to pour new wine into old wineskins. Instead, he was attempting to create new wineskins on the basis of ever

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[242] Ibid., p. 47. [243] Mumford, In the Name of Sanity, p. 187.

"new perceptions." It is in this respect that Mumford relates Emerson to Plato. Both were clearly aware of the transient character of all institutions. Thus, instead of busying themselves by tinkering within the existing system, they sought to achieve new patterns around which new institutions would take shape.[244] As stated earlier in this chapter, however, Mumford is not nearly so happy about Plato's specific projections as he was when this comparison was made.

Emerson's uniqueness in its Nineteenth Century setting Mumford sees as at least two-fold: (1) he recognized not only the factual data of science and the truth of scientific investigation but also the formative role of ideas; and (2) he saw the importance of "dialectic" in bringing forth new mutations which did not exist, ready-made, in the order of nature. This affirmation of both the truths of science and those beyond science's ken saved him from the reductionism of many of his contemporaries. He took science seriously, as many of that day did not, but incorporated it in a larger unity. For him, matter and spirit were not enemies in conflict but instead phases of man's experience. "Matter passed into matter and gave it a form; and symbols and forms were the essences through which man lived and fulfilled his proper being."[245]

Finally, Emerson's prime claim to being a philosopher, in Mumford's opinion, rests on the fact of his personality. He had the good fortune to live a healthy and symmetrical life and in this life philosophy resumed the breadth of human experience which it had known in Pythagoras and Plato. Perhaps, here, more than anywhere else, is Emerson's most lasting contribution to Mumford's own life and thought. For in the

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[244]Mumford, The Golden Day, pp. 47-48. [245]Ibid., p. 50.

same way that Emerson's reflections on life were the direct result of his continuing experience with his immediate personal and social environment, so are Mumford's. And in the same way that Emerson sought constantly to expose himself to all aspects of Nineteenth Century New England, so Mumford has sought to do in Twentieth Century America. Both were willing to forfeit the formal expertise of philosophical inquiry which comes with intense scholarly specialization in order to learn from all aspects of their environment. In Mumford's mind this is true philosophy and is probably one of the major reasons for his significance on the contemporary scene.

Henry David Thoreau, like Walt Whitman, built upon the foundation laid by Emerson and carried his vision further. Essentially, Thoreau's importance for Mumford lies in his life-long attempt to discover what a truly human life is. He was not, contrary to popular opinion, interested in animal hardihood nor simplification of life as ends in themselves. He practiced these things, instead, to the end that a better life might be found. This constitutes his attraction for Mumford. Mumford sees him not as a fanatic who practiced bare living as a moral exercise but as one who was attempting to save on the low levels in order that he might spend on the high ones. De Tocqueville, Mumford observes, had described an American as one who "clings to the world's goods as if he were certain never to die; and he is so hasty at grasping at all within his reach, that one would suppose he was constantly afraid of not living long enough to enjoy them. He clutches everything, he holds nothing fast, but soon loosens his grasp to pursue fresh gratifications." Thoreau completely reversed this process. He turned away consciously from all which seemed

to him to detract from life's priorities.[246] In Thoreau, simplification did not lead to the cult of simplicity but, instead, to a higher civilization.

Also, his much discussed individualism was not meant to be practiced at the expense of one's social existence. It was, instead, a necessary complement of the thoroughly socialized life of the New England town. Thoreau and others like him prevented New England from becoming a collection of yes-men without convictions and opinions of their own. He practiced individualism not in order to destroy a society's social life but instead to create a better social order. Related to this was his attitude toward the state. The state, for Thoreau, was not an ultimate value but an instrumental one. Therefore, when it stood in the way of ultimate values rather than acting as a vehicle for their achievement, it was to be opposed. The renewed interest in Thoreau, particularly among students, as a result of repressive acts of the Federal government vis a vis the Viet Nam War must be a source of great satisfaction to Mumford in a generally disillusioning period. Years ago he had anticipated this interest. In speaking of Thoreau's great essay on civil disobedience in The Brown Decades, written in 1931, Mumford stated that, "to fancy that Thoreau has been made irrelevant by the Machine Age is to lose sight not merely of the point of his criticism, but of his actual historical position."[247]

William Sloane Coffin, Jr., recently convicted of encouraging young men to avoid the draft, is but one contemporary example of Mumford's prescience. In a statement in a recent issue of Christianity and Cri-

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[246] Ibid., p. 53.

[247] Mumford, The Brown Decades, p. 70.

sis, Dr. Coffin, defending those who refuse to surrender their conscience to the state, said the following:

> In the Nineteenth Century many Abolitionists ended up behind bars, as did Thoreau with these incredibly modern words: 'I am first of all a citizen of the world, and of this country only at a much later and convenient hour.' In the Twentieth Century there were the suffragettes and Eugene Debs, who in Thoreau's vein proclaimed: 'I have no country to fight for; my country is the earth, and I am a citizen of the world.' For publicly preaching this sentiment he was sentenced at the age of sixty-five to ten years in the Atlanta Penitentiary."[248]

If this statement had been written but a few weeks after it was, Coffin probably would have added the name of Martin Luther King, who died for expressing and acting out similar statements.* Coffin's own rhetoric expressed the conviction in the following way, again reminiscent of Thoreau: "I do not think any man ever has the right to break the law, but I do think that upon occasion every man has the duty to do so."[249] One can draw a straight line from Thoreau to Debs to King to Coffin. After thirty-odd years the prophetic quality of Mumford's estimate of Thoreau's continuing and increasing significance has become evident.

Thoreau's scientific method, given expression in his study of nature, is of great importance for Mumford's thought also. For when Thoreau studied nature, he was searching not only for those likenesses or distinctions which help to create classified indexes but he was seeking also in nature for "all the manifold qualities of being."[250] He did not disdain science, by any means, but he would not allow the practical of-

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[248]William Sloane Coffin, Jr., "Civil Disobedience, the Draft and the War," Christianity and Crisis, Vol. XXVIII, (February 5, 1968), p. 9.

*Coffin, incidentally, referred to Thoreau in a number of his public statements.

[249]Ibid. [250]Mumford, The Golden Day, p. 54.

fices of science to dominate all other forms of understanding. In Thoreau, science became but one instrument in the development of a humane life. Mumford states:

> ...a Darwin dancing for joy over a slide in his microscope, or a Pupin, finding the path to physics through his contemplation of the stars he watched as a herd-boy through the night, are not poorer scientists but richer ones for these joys and delights: they merely bow to the bias of utilitarianism when they leave these things out of their reports.[251]

For Thoreau, on the other hand, the latter was central to his perceptions. He wanted men to see, breathe, smell, feel, and touch the world about them in order to enlarge their lives.

Finally, in recent years, as Mumford with increasing trepidation has watched man remove himself ever further from the land, his imagination has been increasingly stirred, as was Thoreau's, by the contribution the land makes to one's continuing humanity. For in its continuing variety of forms and its response to the changing seasons, the land offers a stimulus and challenge to man, the absence of which stifles the senses and deadens the imagination. In his son, Geddes, it is perhaps accurate to say that Mumford saw Thoreau's spirit reincarnated. For as Mumford says in Green Memories, between the ages of eleven and seventeen Geddes was renewing the spirit which Thoreau had brought to the American landscape a century before. "He responded in every fiber to Thoreau's question: "Who would not rise to meet the expectation of the land?"[252] In communion with the land about him, Geddes had found the same invigoration of spirit as his earlier forbearer. Amenia, New York and its surroundings was to him and, indeed, was and is to his father what Walden was to

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[251] Ibid., p. 54. [252] Mumford, Green Memories, p. 115.

Henry David Thoreau.

Mumford begins his discussion of Walt Whitman in The Golden Day by stating that "in the greatness of Whitman the genius of Emerson was justified."[253] Whitman, he says, was a cosmos, all-inclusive, who identified himself with the vastness of "the American continent, entering into the experience of the pioneer, the mechanic, the woodsman, the soldier, and the farmer. His ultimate greatness lay in the fact that he opened himself to all that surrounded him and extracted from this a new shape, "which was himself." All his work is the man; "every part of the man threw forth tendrils which clung to the objects of poems." To read Whitman sympathetically, Mumford claims, is to reform oneself in the process into an approximation of this new form.

Not only Mumford's estimate of the mature Whitman but also his conception of the nature of all great art as well is pointed up in the following passage:

> Only common place works of art reflect the everyday personality of the reader: the supreme works always show or hint of the new shape the reader may become: they are prophetic, formative...had Whitman died in the cradle...the possibilities of American life would have been definitely impoverished. He created a new pattern of experience and character. The work he conceived still remains to be done: the American he evoked does not as yet exist.[254]

Mumford sees Whitman's major purpose in writing as that of crystallizing "our most precious experience," and modifying by that act, "the daily routine."[255] He was attempting to do for his day that which other good literature had done for theirs. His work was an attempt to give to America a native source of strength unique to it in a way that Hebraic

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[253]Mumford, The Golden Day, p. 59.

[254]Ibid., p. 64. [255]Ibid., p. 65.

literature and the Classics could never do, as valuable as they were.

> In America, in modern life, on the farm and in the factory, in the progress of souls along the grand roads of the Universe, in company with the Great Companions, the swift and majestic men, the capacious and broad-bosomed women--here was the stuff for new Vedas, Cycles, and Testaments.[256]

All of Whitman's writings were pointed to one ultimate end--the creation of an abundance of rich personalities.

Mumford is not blind to Whitman's weaknesses. He recognizes different stages in Whitman's writings and sees him progressively moving through what he calls "the hard shell of Puritanism," "the shell of republicanism" in which he glorified emerging political institutions, and through "the flimsy casement of romantic poetry." But Whitman ultimately exchanged these for astute and searching criticism as well as a profound vision. No critic, Mumford contends, was as unmercifully accurate as Whitman in his analysis of America in Democratic Vistas. He knew as well or better than any of his contemporaries that America's promise had not been fulfilled. He called his country "canker'd, crude, superstitious, and rotten...the element of the moral conscience...seems to me either entirely lacking, or seriously enfeebled and ungrown."[257] But his vision and his hope remained, and in his poems the vision was formulated in such a way as to transform that which is into that which ought to be.

The synthesis which Whitman achieved, Mumford continues, eluded all ordinary labels. One could find it in the Weltanschauung of Hegel, "the electric doctrine of Emerson," and much else. But the result...

> had the smell of reality which was science; it had the largeness of comprehension which was philosophy; and it had the doubts, searchings, quests, achievements and consummations which are the stuff of

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[256] Ibid., p. 66. [257] Mumford, The Brown Decades, pp. 29-30.

life itself.

Within his immediate experience Whitman found the meaning of the universe and asked for no further confirmation. "Such faith does not need external props and certitudes: it mocks at the testimony of bibles, for it is itself the source of such testimony."[258]

The above quoted statement was written in the Nineteen Twenties. It is difficult to believe that Mumford would write it today because he is now more aware than he was then of the powerful influences which one's external environment brings to bear on his inner perceptions. Whitman's faith was nurtured by a particular environment without which he may well have been an unbeliever. Mumford's classic The City in History and his numerous essays on major contemporary architects stand as monumental testimony to his awareness of this truth.

Herman Melville, the last of the four Nineteenth Century American figures Mumford looks to for insight into the human condition, distinguished himself particularly in his great epic, Moby Dick. In this book Mumford finds that penetrating meditation on the world and life and time which he calls true philosophy. He sees in Melville's reflections on the nature of freedom, necessity, and chance, the stuff out of which great philosophy is forged.

Very briefly, Mumford interprets Moby Dick in the following way: on one level the whale is nature, that which man subdues, analyzes, and uses for his own purposes. But there is another side of nature symbolized by the white whale--this side of nature threatens man, calls forth all his heroic powers, but in the end destroys him. This aspect of na-

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[258] Mumford, The Golden Day, p. 63.

ture cannot be controlled:

> The White Whale is not the kindly, milk-fed Absolute, in which all conflicts are reconciled and all contradictions united into a higher kind of knowledge; no, the White Whale is the sheer brute energy of the Universe, which challenges and checks the spirit of man. It is only the lonely heroic spirit, who declares himself a sovereign nature, that dares follow the White Whale; and once he comes to close quarters with the creature, there is no issue but death. The White Whale is the external force of Nature and Destiny. In the end it conquers: it must conquer: until the spirit of man is itself Leviathan, and can meet its antagonist on even terms.[259]

In discussing Moby Dick in The Golden Day and in Herman Melville, Mumford contends that whatever meaning is to be found in the universe will be put there by man. "Meaning, significance, attends only that little part of the universe man has built up and settled."[260] Since this stance contrasts so sharply with his mature position alluded to earlier, it will be of help to develop briefly the earlier stance to point up the shift in thinking.

In both The Golden Day and Herman Melville, Mumford could find "no concern except in man himself over the ceaseless motions and accidents that take place in nature."[261] At best, the world in which man finds himself is indifferent to man. At worst, it is actively malevolent. Therefore, whatever love man finds in his world he has placed there himself. There is a heroic quality in man. Ahab, for example, represents this quality in that he defeats in himself that which would retreat from Moby Dick. But in battling against the brutality of external nature with power rather than love, he became the image of that which he hated most and thus surrendered his humanity. He forgot that the way of human growth in

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[259] Ibid., p. 75.

[260] Ibid., p. 76.

[261] Mumford, Herman Melville, p. 185.

the midst of an unmeaning universe is not more power but more love.

Man's ultimate defense against the universe, Mumford continues, against its evil, accident, and malice is not by a fictitious resolution into an absolute. Voltaire's attack on Leibnitz in Candide has settled that argument. Man's defense, instead, lies in...

> that self which we share with our fellows and which assures us that whatever happens to our carcasses and hides, good men will remain, to carry on the work, to foster and protect the things we have recognized as excellent.[262]

Men, in cooperation with others of like mind, must create a realm independent of the hostile forces in the universe, one which can withstand external adversity. This Melville accomplished. For in Moby Dick he conquered the White Whale in his own consciousness.

> ...instead of blankness there was significance, instead of aimless energy there was purpose, and instead of random living there was Life. The universe is inscrutable, unfathomable, malicious, so--like the white whale and his element. Art in the broad sense of all humanizing effort is man's answer to this condition: for it is the means by which he circumvents or postpones his doom, and bravely meets his tragic destiny. Not tame and gentle bliss, but disaster, heroically encountered, is man's true happy ending.[263]

This thorough-going humanism contrasts sharply with Mumford's mature position. Though this latter will be developed more fully in the following chapter, it is necessary to outline it briefly at this point. In The Conduct of Life, after reflecting on the myths which men throughout time have used to attempt to explain the human condition, he postulates whether there might not be some larger purpose and deeper significance to man's life than any previous myth has imagined. It is at this point that he makes the following definitive statement:

For the more that positive knowledge advances in every realm, from

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[262] Ibid., pp. 186-187. [263] Ibid., p. 187.

> nuclear physics to the inchoate world of the unconscious, the more one begins to detect an underlying pattern, an emerging order of design: a pattern and order through which freedom supervenes upon necessity, purpose upon chance, and the person himself upon the cosmos that envelops him.[264]

Mumford's reflections and his investigations in a multitude of fields in the years that intervened between the time of Herman Melville and The Conduct of Life convinced him that there is more reason to postulate purpose than nonpurpose, pattern rather then meaninglessness. He continues by stating that all the high religions have instinctively known that each man's life is part of a larger cosmic purpose and this has been their strength. Their common error has been, however, and one which still prevails, their over-confidence in developing the specific nature of the process. Historically, "the sense of the divine" is almost inseparable from man's sense of his own destiny. Man continues to find stirrings within himself "to look beyond his animal existence and not be fully satisfoed with its immediate substance." This, Mumford says, is his dim recognition that man's meaning and destiny is larger than the life he now experiences, "that all existence has goals and ends, still almost impenetrable, which in their further unfolding will give fuller meaning to the cosmic solitude and the frustrating brevity" of his life.[265]

Thus, by analogy from his own experience and the historic experience of other men, in which he finds both stirrings of a divine discontent and occasional sparks of divinity, and because of what he calls recent "causal inquiries" in the biological sciences, Mumford postulates an emerging cosmic order to which man is ultimately and purposefully related. This shift in his thinking from purposelessness to purpose, from lack of

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[264]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 65. [265]Ibid., p. 69.

meaning to continuous growth in meaning, is perhaps the most significant turn his thought has ever taken. This mature position will be developed in detail in the following chapter.

Both the periods and the personalities who formed and were formed by them to which Mumford looks for direction in developing his own position have now been sketched. But contrary to some of his critics who accuse him of wishing naively to attempt a simple return to these periods, he sees their significance in a different way. He says, for example, that "we cannot return to the America of the Golden Day" nor can we even "keep it fixed in the posture it once naturally assumed."[266] The world is a dramatically different place than it was then and exacts different and more difficult demands of us. But reflection on these periods can do at least two basic things for us. (1) We are reminded of values basic to the human personality which we are ignoring at our peril. Some of these noted in this chapter include the need of any organism, personal and social, for a limitation on its growth; an openness to aspects of human experience other than that amenable to human intelligence; a movement beyond a sterile specialism toward a more general comprehension of life; a simplification of life by means of an establishment of human priorities; and an intimate involvement of one's life in the life of his community. These and other values deeply needed in historic experience need to be recaptured, Mumford contends, if life is not to elude us. (2) But possibly more important, the two examples of Athens and Transcendentalist New England point up the necessity of a united vision of life in which all aspects of this life look beyond themselves to a greater unity. He says,

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[266]Mumford, The Golden Day, p. 142.

in speaking specifically of the Transcendentalists, that

> ...a new world began to form out of the distracting chaos: wealth was in its place, and science was in its place, and the deeper life of man began again to emerge, no longer stunted by the instrumentalities it had conceived and set to work.[267]

It is difficult to imagine a more important issue than this in our present day. Is it possible, in the midst of an almost unbelievable pluralism such as now exists, to posit an underlying unity on which a common human life can be based? Mumford states that it is not only possible but of absolute necessity that this be done. Athens and Transcendentalist New England have provided for him and for us a foundation on which to build.

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[267] Ibid., p. 142.

CHAPTER V

THE SENSE OF THE DIVINE

Before proceeding in the final chapter to a statement of Mumford's Concept of the Person, it is important to examine one further aspect of his thought which bears significantly on this position--his understanding of the role of religion generally and that of Jesus and the Christian Church specifically. Religion has taken on an increasing significance for Mumford over the years, one which appeared in strength in Faith for Living and The Condition of Man and came to maturity in The Conduct of Life and The Transformations of Man. In this chapter I will attempt to outline what appears to be the major role which religion plays in Mumford's thought and comment critically upon it. An important part of the chapter will be a discussion of Mumford's contention that basic to man's nature is "a sense of the divine" and the implications this "sense" has for contemporary theology. As we shall see in the final chapter, if Mumford had developed this insight and integrated it into his positive program for renewal, his program would have proved more convincing.

In Faith for Living, which appeared in 1940, undeveloped religious themes appear in Mumford's thought which herald a more sophisticated treatment in works which were to follow. The tone of the book was such that Irwin Erdman, reviewing it in the Saturday Review of Literature,

caustically categorized it as "a secular sermon."[268] Reinhold Niebuhr, on the other hand, reviewing it in The Nation expressed a strong sense of agreement and stated, "I do not know how the whole spiritual problem of our day could be put more neatly."[269] Since the book does represent a major turn in Mumford's thought toward the general area of religion, it might be well to mention the particular religious themes, which appear in it in a somewhat haphazard way, before proceeding to a more structured analysis later in this chapter. It was written by Mumford in a time of personal and social crisis. In the introduction he says that it was written twenty years too late so that it is "a testament for survivors, if ever they reach shore."[270]

Early in the book, in talking about the breakdown of values, Mumford makes the point that the values which people in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries have regarded as the result of "natural human goodness" are actually the survival of "a strong ethic and a deliberate discipline" issuing from a Christian ideology. Only now, as this "unearned increment" is disappearing, are men becoming aware of its source.[271] Further on in the book, in looking for some means by which society could be mobilized around a common purpose, he reflects on the ability of the church historically to bring coherence into the lives of large groups of people and wonders how this same ability might be utilized in his own

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[268]Irwin Erdman, Review of Faith for Living, The Saturday Review of Literature, Vol. XXII, (August 31, 1940), p. 7.

[269]Reinhold Niebuhr, Review of Faith for Living, The Nation, Vol. CLI, (September 14, 1940), p. 221.

[270]Mumford, Faith for Living, introduction.

[271]Ibid., p. 4.

day. In this context, the concept of "sacrifice" looms large.[272]

Mumford makes the point that, on the basis of past history, one would think that a strong case could be made for religion--particularly Christianity--as a binding point in society. But the fact that the churches have, by and large, been "disloyal to their own ideal traditions" makes him doubt the wisdom of such an approach. He cites the sectarianism of the church, the Catholic Church's desire for power which led it into involvements with Fascism and Nazism, the Protestant Church's unwillingness to assume political responsibility, and the unwillingness of both Protestant and Catholic "to recognize as religious those contemporary manifestations of religion that take other than the old familiar forms."[273] This latter, he says, has not only denied the church the creative efforts of some of the most insightful individuals of the last three hundred years but "has compelled the living to seek for spiritual nutrient outside the church."[274]

One might respond by stating that there has been some improvement regarding the church's recognition of creative talent beyond its walls in the intervening years between the words quoted immediately above and the present time. One thinks, for example, of the church's conversations with Existentialism and Process Philosophy, its more recent borrowings from the world of communications in reinvigorating its liturgy, and its deeper appreciation of the insights of so-called "secular" artists. But the question does remain: Is this new direction too little and too late? Have creative individuals had to seek for "spiritual nutrient" outside the church for so long that it has now become impossible for this process

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[272] Ibid., p. 21. [273] Ibid., p. 25. [274] Ibid.

to be reversed to any significant degree? It appears that a situation arises at a particular moment in the historical process which either is grasped at that moment or can never again be recaptured. It may well be that the latter is the case regarding the vast majority of creative individuals and the church.

One might cite in this connection an important article in the June, 1968 edition of Trans-action magazine misleadingly titled, "Will Ethics Be the Death of Christianity?" In this article, Charles Y. Glock, former director of the Survey Research Center, The University of California, Berkeley; and Rodney Stark, a research sociologist at the Center, drew the following conclusions on the basis of survey research:

> ...among Protestants, the more a church member is committed to ethics, the less likely he is to contribute money to the church, regardless of his level of orthodoxy [the authors define orthodoxy as a literal interpretation of the phrase, "Christ crucified, risen, coming again," a belief in virgin birth, etc.]. The best contributors are those of unwavering orthodoxy, who reject the religious importance of loving their neighbors or doing good for others. A similar relationship exists among Roman Catholics."

Further...

> ...among Protestants, it is clear that the higher their ethicalism, the less likely they are to attend church regularly. The best attenders are the highly orthodox who reject ethical tenets. Among Roman Catholics, it is unclear from these data whether or not ethicalism has any effect at all upon church attendance.[275]

It appears fairly obvious that on the basis of these documented statements Mumford's contention that "the living" have been forced to seek spiritual nutrient outside the church remains true, at least in this country, and indeed is a growing phenomenon rather than a decreasing one. Apparently, major theological developments decades in the making have

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[275]Rodney Stark and Charles Y. Glock, "Will Ethics Be the Death of Christianity?," Trans-action, Vol. V, (June, 1968), p. 12.

failed to penetrate very far beyond a few select theologians. It seems incredible that those individuals most concerned about the state of their neighbor's existence feel that to act on this concern they must disassociate themselves from the life of the church and those who "reject the religious importance of loving their neighbors" remain closest to the church's life. The church has said to both these groups, in one way or another, that one has but two alternatives when facing issues most important for his life: either accept "orthodoxy" at the expense of "ethics" and remain a churchman; or reject "orthodoxy," respond to the ethical impulses in one's nature, and renounce the church. Surely, there are innumerable other alternatives, some of which are presented by scholars of the stature of Paul Tillich, Reinhold Niebuhr, and Arnold Toynbee and more recently, in the developing work of men such as Michael Novak, Harvey Cox, Langdon Gilkey, and numerous others. But unless these alternatives are communicated quickly in meaningful ways to "the living" of our time, the thought of such men, while nourishing the intellectual and social life of society in general, will be of no avail in saving the vitality of the church's life.

Glock and Stark do offer a ray of hope. They claim that "liberal" churches have within their ranks dormant Christians. These individuals...

> ...have adopted the theology of the new reformation, but at the same time they have stopped attending church, stopped participating in church activities, stopped contributing funds, and stopped praying. They are uninformed about religion. And only a minority feel that their religion provides them with answers to the meaning and purpose of life...[276]

These men and women represent a nucleus for renewal because in their disillusionment with "orthodoxy" they are searching diligently for meaning.

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[276] Ibid., p. 13.

This represents a potentially hopeful situation, but Glock and Stark do not expect the church to take advantage of this potential "any time soon." For not only is leadership lacking but "there is no clearly formulated blueprint for renovating the churches." They are right, and no blueprint is likely to emerge soon because no one is sure what the expression of the Christian faith ought to be in the mid-Twentieth Century.

Glock and Stark conclude their article by stating that as matters now stand there appears to be little long-term future for the church as we now know it. They expect...

> ...all of the Christian churches will continue a policy of drift, with a rhetoric of hope and a reality of business as usual. There will be more mergers and more efforts to modernize classical interpretations of the faith, but these will go forward as compromises rather than as breaks with the past. Perhaps, when the trends we see have caused greater havoc, radical change will follow. Institutions, like people, have a strong will to survive. But institutions do die, and often efforts to save them come too late.[277]

Glock and Stark are also right in asserting that a deeply rooted barrier to renewal is the tendency to tinker with classical interpretations of the faith rather than to rethink them radically and perhaps move beyond them. However, one does this not by breaking with the past, as they seem to infer, but by affirming one's past, learning from it, but in the light of new insights and a new situation being willing to move beyond it. Hopefully, Mumford's insights into the nature of religion as expounded in this chapter will be of assistance at precisely this point, though, as we shall see, his own prescriptions are also in need of correctives.

To return to Faith for Living, Mumford discusses in it two Christian themes which he finds significant. The first is the concept of re-

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[277] Ibid., p. 14.

birth in which, he contends, one can find the guidelines for a refashioning of men and society. Man truly lives "by scrapping and rebuilding his dead selves--which is to say, by being born again. This holds as much for communities as for personalities."[278] Another is, in his words, "free will, the power to go wrong" which, to his mind at least, is an "essential theological dogma of the Christian Church."[279] Free will, he continues, is the foundation both of high morality and high politics. In this context, he discusses at some length what he calls the politics of sacrifice.

It should be said that both Mumford's discussion of rebirth and that of free will in Faith for Living suffer from oversimplification, if not outright distortion. Rebirth is a central concept of the Christian faith but it is quite different from that which Mumford's statement implies. According to the Christian tradition, one cannot on his own volition merely decide to scrap his old self in exchange for a new one. Instead, one's ability to do so is dependent on God's grace which impinges upon one and accompanies one's act at every stage of the conversion process. This statement applies also to the doctrine of free will. As we have seen in our discussion of the doctrine of sin as expressed by Reinhold Niebuhr, the Christian tradition asserts that there is a principle or force of evil which exists prior to any evil human action. The symbol of the devil points to a force of evil which, in a sense, makes for the inevitability of sin but does not excuse man when he sins. This position, while not totally understandable in rational terms, does appear to be verified in one's experience. Therefore, to define the Christian doctrine of free will as "the power to go wrong" is to oversimplify what

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[278]Mumford, Faith for Living, p. 26. [279]Ibid., p. 43.

is a much more profound understanding.

Despite these oversimplifications, Faith for Living is an important book in Mumford's writing career in that he comes, at least hesitantly, to terms as he had not done previously with the religious heritage. More than anything else, Faith for Living is his contention that religion, along with the expressive arts, represents that aspect of man's experience which reminds man that if he is to live, he cannot abandon the continued cultivation of the self. As I have argued in chapters one and two of this thesis, with the exception of a limited number of men in our day, contemporary society has neglected this task at its peril.

Let us proceed at this point to a more detailed discussion of Mumford's understanding of religion and its role in his thought. A statement he made in The Conduct of Life provides a good starting point. Religion is, he claims:

> The sphere beyond knowledge and certainty, where ultimate mystery itself adds a new dimension to meaning. Out of the silence of infinite space comes a sound: the birth cry of human consciousness. Against the enveloping darkness man throws the searchlight of his intelligence. As man projects further the cone of light, through his gifts of interpretation, he likewise widens the perimeter of the surrounding darkness. The ultimate gift of conscious life is a sense of the mystery that encompasses it.[280]

Or, again,

> ...religion...is a body of intuitions and working beliefs that issue out of that part of man's nature and experience which science, deliberately seeking piecemeal knowledge of an immediately verifiable nature, rejects.[281]

Religion is interested in the meaning of the whole, the purpose underlying all surface manifestations, and this is one of its most significant contributions to man's estate.

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[280] Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 57. [281] Ibid., p. 59.

The conventional scientist regards the role of religion, Mumford states, as meaningless because it is dealing with so-called unanswerable questions. But Mumford's answer to the scientist is that the raising of unanswerable questions is basic to human life and to ignore these questions is to reduce the dimensions of what it means to be a human person. Primitive peoples and children, as yet not duly influenced by the prejudices of contemporary society, continue to raise questions about the ultimate meaning of life beyond all provisional solutions and, in this sense, are immeasurably wiser. Rather than turn our backs on questions of ultimate meaning, Mumford believes that the first step in man's reeducation is that of coming to terms with such questions.

To be sure, man's answers to the ultimate questions have as yet been far from adequate. But the projections, he continues, have not been without some positive results. Man's traffic in the cosmic has given him "a better grasp of cosmic processes than a more limited, down-to-earth attitude would have given him."[282] In the same way that the anatomist, given a fragment of the human skull, can reconstruct with reasonable accuracy other characteristics of the head and even to some degree the remainder of the human body, so the sensitive religious mind, constantly plumbing the depths of human experience "may have a faint twilight perception of the constitution of the universe itself." Admittedly, the very nature of the cosmos prohibits anyone from ever fully comprehending its mysteries, yet continuing reflection upon it will open the way to man's further transformations.

Mumford, in speaking of his son, Geddes, says that Geddes' inter-

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[282] Ibid., p. 60.

est in nature and "even in science" was of a religious cast. He studied science not so much for its practical applications but as another means by which he might penetrate into deeper levels of experience. Mumford continues by stating that "the mysterium tremendum of religion impinged on his consciousness."[283] We quote this phrase because Mumford not only uses the words Rudolph Otto made famous in describing the religious experience but he appears to share a similar understanding of the phrase's meaning, at least that aspect of the concept which Otto calls "fascinans."

Otto says that the numinous experience presents itself as something uniquely attractive and fascinating to man. For while at the same time that the daemonic-divine object, however presented, may appear to one as that which provokes dread, it no less "allures with a potent charm...."[284] For in outwardly diverse but in inwardly akin forms it has one result: the stimulation of a strange and mighty propulsion toward an ideal good known only to religion and fundamentally non-rational in nature.

> This shows that above and beyond our rational being lies hidden the ultimate and highest part of our nature, which can find no satisfaction in the mere allaying of the needs of our sensuous, psychical, or intellectual impulses and cravings.[285]

While Mumford would insist that this ideal goal can be perceived by way of the arts as well as religion, Otto's "fascinans" does describe quite accurately his own understanding of this basic aspect of human nature--a continuing and compelling need to tap the mysteries of the cosmos and

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[283] Mumford, Green Memories, section 10, p. 58.

[284] Rudolf Otto, The Idea of the Holy (New York: Oxford University Press, 1958), p. 31.

[285] Ibid., p. 36.

man's evolving place within it. Nothing is more unaccountable to man, he says, "than the stirrings he finds in himself, usually fitful but sometimes overwhelming, to look beyond this animal existence and not be fully satisfied with [life's] immediate substance."[286]

Mumford calls these stirrings "the sense of the divine." Since they are a historic fact of man's nature, he continues, any theory that tries either to ignore them or to explain them away is not doing justice to all the dimensions of human life. The strength of the historic religions has been their recognition of these stirrings, but their error lies in the belief that they have "any positive knowledge of cosmic intentions or any definite clues to the ultimate goals of this process."[287] Too often, he rightly asserts, the claims of the high religions to divine revelation have been presumptuous.

Mumford's discussion of man's "sense of the divine" has immense significance for contemporary Christian theology. As everyone is aware, layman as well as theologian, the most discussed theological development in many years is the so-called "Death of God" school of thought represented by such men as William Hamilton, Thomas J. J. Altizer, and Paul Van Buren. There are significant differences among these men but each appears to be saying that God no longer holds any meaning or relevance for contemporary men. Langdon Gilkey, for example, in an article entitled, "Is God Dead?," contends that the first premise of this theological stance is:

> ...the unreality of God for our age; his absence from our contemporary experience; the irrelevance and meaninglessness of all talk about him; the emptiness and actual harmfulness of any so-called relation to him; the impossibility of understanding our experience of

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[286]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 68. [287]Ibid., p. 69.

evil if we try to believe in him.[288]

It is not my intention to present a full critique of this position but instead to point to the corrective which Mumford provides in his contention that one's sense of the Divine is basic to the human person. Surely, many of the instincts of the "Death of God" theologians are accurate. They have been helpful in reminding us that theological formulations are historically conditioned by the period in which they were developed in the same way that other philosophical and political formulations are so conditioned. The pronouncements of Nicaea are subject to the same canons of historical investigation as are the dialogues of Plato. This being the case, God's nature may be radically different from that historically expressed. This is, at least in part, what the new relativism is all about. Whether one attempts to soften such relativism by judging all formulations according to how they stack up against the picture of the Christ as witnessed to in the New Testament, or, as in the case of Lewis Mumford, according to how they appear to correspond with the nature of human life as revealed at all levels of human experience, the relativism remains.

A second accurate instinct is the necessity for theology to communicate itself to the contemporary world, to enter into the life and thought of its world so that it can address itself to it. An axiom in communications is that the first responsibility of an editor is to get his material read. The "Death of God" theologians appear to have internalized this axiom since they, probably more than any other recent theological movement, have captured the attention of the public and thus have

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[288]Langdon Gilkey, "Is God Dead?," The Voice: Bulletin of Crozer Theological Seminary, LVII (January, 1965).

brought theology back into broad public discussion. Given the broad gulf which still exists between church and world, this is no small achievement. Simply because one is being read obviously does not mean that one has the truth. But on the other hand, engagement between author and reader can be the avenue by which one arrives at clearer perceptions of the truth. The "Death of God" theologians at least have helped to make the general reader aware that theology is still a vigorous academic discipline.

A third correct instinct, and perhaps the most important one, is the perception that any discussion of God must be directly related to all levels of human experience. Crisis Theology had so radically distinguished between faith and other forms of perception that contemporary man found it irrelevant. Crisis Theology's contention that faith came wholly from the Divine and was unrelated to one's normal perceptual apparatus, indeed contradicted all one's experience, was seen as an affront to man's humanness and thus rejected. The "Death of God" theologians, as opposed to Crisis Theology, have tried to take contemporary human experience seriously and to build a theological program which speaks meaningfully to it. They are aware that unless contemporary man's faith stance is thoroughly integrated into man's total perceptual apparatus, it will cease to have any meaning for him.

Despite these insights, the "Death of God" theologians err in that, when they speak of the unreality of God for our age, they are contradicting one of the potential sources of strength in their position--the need to take man's experience seriously. This is probably due to at least two reasons: (1) their overreaction to Crisis Theology; but more importantly, (2) their limitation of the definition of human experience to contemporary experience because they have succumbed to the ahistorical

character of contemporary life and thought. The reader will remember that a similar point was made in chapter one in a different context. The "Death of God" theologians seem to work with the assumption that since contemporary man rejects the reality of God, it must be so, despite the broader historical experience of man's sense of the Divine since his primordial beginnings. Some of them, at least, seem to be unwilling to investigate the possibility that man's loss of this sense may not be his movement into maturity but may instead reflect a diminution of his full humanity. * It is at this point that Mumford's assertion that the sense of the divine is basic to man is so important. This sense must not be stifled, but encouraged; for, by way of it, man continues to relate himself to the cosmos which envelops him and haltingly penetrates the mystery of his being.

Further, it may be that the "Death of God" theologians have not accurately read the contemporary mood. The concept of God may not be as absent from man's contemporary experience as they think. This statement receives support in a recent article by Professor Robert Michaelsen, Chairman of the Department of Religious Studies at the Santa Barbara campus of the University of California. In this article, entitled "A Quiet Revolution," Dr. Michaelsen tells of the dramatic increase of interest among students in the study of religion. He quotes figures which demonstrate this increase, both in terms of the number of courses being taught in colleges and universities around the country and the student enrollment in these. He then discusses the results of a questionnaire which he prepared and which was submitted to students at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and the University of Iowa.

The conclusions reached by way of the questionnaire include: (1) The majority of students indicated they took a course in religion out of

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* This criticism applies most clearly to William Hamilton and probably does not apply to Gabriel Vahanian.

"intellectual curiosity"; (2) Most students regard themselves as "moderately or casually religious"; (3) "Response to one question would seem to indicate that the campuses are not overrun with atheists...."[289] Most revealing is the following statement:

> One question, administered to the Californians, showed that 38% indicated their course had made them more interested in theology. This affords a possible clue to the nature of their interest in religion. They are more interested in speculative or constructive than in either dogmatic or historical theology. Tillich is by all odds the most widely read and discussed theologian on campus. And they are more interested in the avant garde within the community of Christian reflection than in either the middle or the rear guard.[290]

Michaelsen's comment that students are interested primarily in speculative theology and that Tillich, perhaps more than any other Christian theologian of our time, excites them, is revealing. Perhaps students relate to Tillich because, like him, they sense the Divine in their lives and are struggling for ways in which this can be meaningfully expressed in our time. It may be that a sense of the Divine is not nearly so absent from the Twentieth Century as some would have us believe. As the church seeks blueprints for change, this should be a major item for consideration.

Certainly, the abuse which the term "God" has suffered in recent years by those who have used it as a cover for injustice, dishonesty, obscurantism, and moral complacency makes one hesitate before advocating God's reality in a world in which many are attempting to live without Him. It may be that the term is beyond recovery and that a new one is needed if one is to speak convincingly of that which lies beyond man and

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[289]Robert Michaelsen, "Quiet Revolution," Journal, Vol. VI, (March, 1968), pp. 14-15.

[290]Ibid., p. 15.

yet continues to impinge upon him. Yet, if one is convinced that the stirrings he finds in himself are not merely the creations of his own imagination but instead the activity of a divine reality, it is incumbent upon him to attempt some formulation of the nature of this reality and its implications for his life and the life of his society. History has always been the arena for the birth and death and rebirth of gods. Many of the gods we have known are now dead, and many at this very moment are close to death. This does not mean that the God who stands behind these gods has also died.

It does mean, however, that He will be known and expressed differently than He was in the past. This thesis is not the place nor am I the person to develop a full-blown concept of the Divine applicable for our time. Indeed, the time for detailed theological reconstruction probably has not yet arrived. But it might be helpful in the next few paragraphs to outline some of the characteristics such a program might include.

Any concept of the Divine will have to take into account the drive within one which urges him beyond present consummations toward dimly imagined and barely formulated possibilities. Human history, John Wild reminds us, can be read as the unfolding of the restlessness of man. There is that within man which disallows him the luxury of satisfaction with his present because he dimly senses a fuller future. Systems of thought and life are no sooner constructed than they are being radically questioned and denied on the basis of inadequacies uncovered through restless inquiry. This is the impingement of the Divine without which man's life would copy that of certain insect societies which have remained stable for millions of years. Men tend very easily to become satisfied with partial consummations. The drive to complacency within each man always

threatens to consume him. Further, we live in a period in history in which men deny man's hidden potentialities by ignoring the inner life through overconcentration on the external world. Thus, without the prodding to continuing transcendence which results from the Divine's impingement on man's consciousness, life will surely stagnate.

The role of theology today is not to reject the possibility of the Divine's entrance into the human estate. Instead, its role is to seek ways through worship, personal encounter, mystical experience by which the Divine, when and where it will might manifest itself. Obviously, the historic religious tradition has no monopoly on the Divine. Indeed, in some ways its past formulations of the Divine's nature and activity may prove so inhibiting to new perceptions that others not directly related to this tradition may have to lead the way. But the historic religious tradition does have a peculiar responsibility. Historically, it has been this tradition which has investigated the Divine's nature most thoroughly and thus has been responsible for man's continuing openness to the Divine call. It would indeed be ironic if the peculiar role were to be abandoned today at the very time in the historical process when it is most needed.

Michael Novak, in a recent discussion speaks of his experience with students in a college classroom. He states:

> So you do turn to their sense of wonderment and mystery. Your focus is upon God rather than self. Young people do understand this. When you talk about meditation or contemplation, the classroom comes alive, the students listen to every word, and you do not want to hit a wrong note anywhere. Students know very well what you are talking about. But the word "God" has been ruined by the way politicians have used it, and I must say by the way some churchmen use it. It's like the word "love." So you do go around by indirection, but you are really talking about God. And what I have been trying to suggest is that one of the problems of the religious institution is to build up the way that one can again talk about him in a meaningful, honest,

way.[291]

Novak is right. The role of the religious institution is not to abandon the question of God but to seek ways in which this question can be discussed honestly and openly.

Again, any concept of the Divine will have to speak to the idol-smashing potentialities in man. Men through the years have been unwilling to identify any human system of meaning, any social order, or way of life, with the perfect society. As we have seen, lasting values have been found in many societies which men today ignore at their peril. But all men and systems have idolatrous pretensions, and it is those who are willing to smash these pretensions who protect man from himself. But the power and insight to stand against such pretension is granted by Him who stands in judgment above all systems. He provides an ideal perspective and an ideal possibility without which men become so locked into a system that they become enslaved by it.

Increasingly, modern man is assuming responsibility for the ordering of his world. He knows that if he does not mold it in accord with the new possibilities opening before him that he will destroy himself. Why, then, has he thus far done so badly? Perhaps because he has closed his eyes and ears to an idol-smashing God who takes him out of his self-centeredness and frees him to confront other definitions of manhood as manifested in historical periods other than his own. It may well be that he cannot look to the Divine for specific answers to his present dilemma, for this may not be the way in which the Divine speaks to man. But what the Divine can do for him is to deny him the destructive self-satisfac-

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[291]Michael Novak, Quoted from "A Center Report/The Church and Society," The Center Magazine, Vol. I, (July, 1968), p. 35.

tion with himself which comes from identification of the present with the millenium. Mumford and others have shown us the hard-won gains of the historical process which today we are ignoring. The Divine, standing above but involved in the historical process, can give man the perspective by which these values might once again be approrpiated. Any concept of the Divine which is to be of significance for the present will include this dimension.

Finally, an adequate concept ot the Divine will take account of that about God which reaches out to men in their extremity. This is the experience of healing which comes to men in their hour of deepest need and which the Christian faith has called grace. This concept has been horribly misused, it has been interpreted mechanically, it has been restricted to particular manifestations of it when it is probably at work in all times and in all places; but it does appear to be an experiential reality. Paul Tillich's discussion of grace in which he states that men find themselves recipients of it without knowing what this power is or from whence it comes is a human experience often enough known that one can at least responsibly speculate that it represents God's ways with men.

St. Paul had experienced this reality through confrontation with Jesus of Nazareth and expressed it thusly:

> I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.
> Romans 8:38-39

But such experience need not be restricted to those who have known such grace in Christ. For in the same way that many in the Old Testament experienced God's love in their time of need, so too individuals today can know this love without its being related to Christ. God's grace appears

when and where it will to bring strength so that men might live. It was this quality of the Divine life which was stressed in chapter two of this statement when the issue of renewal was under discussion. Men will be able to acknowledge and repent of their sins when they know that nothing they have done nor anything the world can do for them can separate them from a loving God.

One can relate this reality to the drive on the part of those concerned for social reform. Any social reformer knows that one of his greatest fears is that of learning to live with the rejection which comes from moving against established interests. This rejection may take the form of social ostracism or physical abuse. Both, however, are difficult because they imply a rejection of one's selfhood. Unless one knows an acceptance which lies on the other side of this rejection, his ability to challenge entrenched wrong is severely weakened. A loving God offers this possibility because men can withstand the rejection of men so long as they know the acceptance of the Divine. One cannot prove that such a God exists, but living in the reality of this God substantiates itself in one's own life.

In sum, a theology adequate for our time will develop at least three characteristics of divinity: that which constantly drives man to restless inquiry; that which judges all human pretensions; and that which loves and accepts men beyond every extremity. These characteristics are not ideologically imposed on the human situation, but arise out of one's attempt to take account responsibily of man's nature and experience. John Wild states:

> If Christianity is to survive after Kierkegaard, it must be understood not so much as a set of doctrines, or propositions to be believed by an inactive intellect, but rather as a way of existing and

> understanding the world, with trust in the unlimited freedom and inexhaustible meaning of a creative source that is present, though concealed, in our human history.[292]

It is in this spirit that the comments above are presented. They are intended to serve as a basis for understanding the world and living responsibly in it.

Mumford proceeds from his discussion of "the sense of the divine" to a discussion of the purposive nature of man and the universe. He contends that it is not necessary for any part of man's life to have been pre-ordained in order for it to have meaning and purpose. Nor is it necessary, he states, for time itself to have a beginning and an ending in the course of which a pre-ordained purpose is being worked out. Instead, he says, both man and the universe <u>may</u> (this is his word) be in the midst of self-fabrication.

> Chaos shaking down into order: order providing a basis for pattern and purposive transformation: purposes diverging into alternative routes, leading to disengagement and detachment from biological compulsions, and so finally, to human freedom.[293]

At a later point in the same book he moves from a tentative "may" to a definitive statement:

> The acceptance of a pervasive teleology or finalism, uniting the cosmos and the human, now becomes our operational postulate and living faith. All life is purposive and goal-seeking; and human life consciously participates in a more universal purpose and seeks goals that lie beyond the mere survival, in a state of animal torpidity, of the species.[294]

Mumford has come to this position by steering a path between what he sees as two unacceptable alternatives--on the one hand, the contention

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[292]John Wild, "The Rebirth of Divine," <u>Radical Theology: Phase Two</u>, edited by C. W. Christian and Glenn R. Wittig, (Philadelphia and New York: J. B. Lippincott Company, 1967), p. 187.

[293]Mumford, <u>The Conduct of Life</u>, p. 69. [294]<u>Ibid</u>., p. 137.

of the historic religious faiths that the universe is "the work of a detached author, who has written the script and has supervised the performance" (he says this goes far beyond the warranted evidence); and on the other, to see it as an aimless accretion of accidents which to him is far less acceptable even than the first.

He states in The Transformations of Man that the naive bias against teleology rooting in the Seventeenth Century was at one time an understandable reaction of men like Galileo and Descartes against the dogmatic finalism of religious thought of the time. However, this reaction unfortunately has led men since to deny any ingrained purpose whatsoever. The following analogy is a good summary statement of his position:

> ...at every stage of the voyage we are greeted, as Columbus was, by unexpected landfalls and strange ports. But this does not say that the entire journey has been aimless and will never get one anywhere. A bottle thrown into the ocean may be carried, by the accidents of the tides and ocean currents, to a distant shore: but the great voyages of discovery were not conducted on the same terms, nor would they have succeeded without a purpose, a direction, and a goal. On the contrary, the end in view selectively controls and orders the sequence that brings about its accomplishments, and the better the end is interpreted, the more direct the voyage is likely to be.[295]

Thus, we see that Mumford does believe that there is a goal toward which man and the cosmos are moving, however tentative that goal may be. The more accurately man is able to interpret it, the more quickly will this goal be realized. One detects here the influence of Bergson who says that the great contribution of the religious genious is that he enables one to understand "the essential function of the universe, which is a

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[295]Mumford, The Transformations of Man, p. 181.

machine for the making of gods."[296]

Mumford believes that to a great extent the revival of interest in the teleological principle has come about because of new developments in the biological sciences and the appearance over the past one hundred years of philosophical positions which have taken former intuitions of unity and scattered insights and worked them into a unified body of knowledge. He points specifically on this latter point to the following groupings: from Darwin to Freud, Humboldt to Geddes, Schliemann to Petrie and Evans, Vico to Toynbee and Teilhard de Chardin. In each instance, he contends, these men have sought to use the insights of myth and guess but to move beyond these through accurate observation and more comprehensive insight.

In the biological sciences, Mumford contends, one sees new evidence that certain attributes of organic existence have been making slow but steady progress. We know that there was far more mind in existence at the time of man's emergence than there was a hundred million years before; we know that since man has emerged there has been not only an increase in the quantity of mind but also in its qualitative attributes. Mumford cites man's increasing sensitiveness, his feeling, his capacity for love, and his ability to encompass with the aid of symbols a longer and fuller sense of the whole.

Since Mumford does not give supporting evidence for these statements, it might be well to at least point to such from a distinguished biologist, Dr. Hudson Hoagland. Dr. Hoagland states, on the basis of broad scientific documentation, that in the course of the last million

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[296]Henri Bergson, The Two Sources of Morality and Religion, as quoted in Twentieth Century Religious Thought by John Macquarrie (New York: Harper and Row, 1963), p. 173.

years a remarkable change in the structure of the human brain and its related powers has occurred. He continues by asserting that "the brain of our hominid ancestors of a million years ago in Africa weighed somewhere between 450 to 650 grams. The present human brain is two to three times this size."[297] As a result of this revolution, a psycho-social revolution has occurred also, one which though dating back at least two million years has accelerated greatly in the last one hundred thousand years. This evolution is dependent on the increased sophistication of language:

> It depends upon the transmission of verbal and symbolic communication between people, between emerging hominid creatures, able to communicate by words, and later by written symbol, in such a way as to enhance their ability, to live together in groves.[298]

The above statements are echoed by the vast majority of contemporary scholars in the biological and anthropological sciences.

Mumford builds on his statement that man has broadened his capacity for love by stating that no theory which does not include the widening of the province for love is adequate. Man's potential for love (that of embracing otherness in all of its forms) has grown as new avenues of communication (reproduction, nurture, language, technics, etc.) have arisen. But man today endangers this movement by building structures which tend to thwart organic development rather than enhance it. He is denying his own potential capacities for love at his peril.

Mumford's stance in this respect is similar to the position of Alfred North Whitehead who states the following in Science and the Modern World:

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[297] Hudson Hoagland, "Some Biological Considerations of Ethics," Technology and Culture in Perspective, The Church Society for College Work, February, 1967, p. 16.

[298] Ibid.

> Faith in reason is the trust that the ultimate nature of things lie together in a harmony which excludes mere arbitariness....This faith cannot be justified by any inductive generalization. It springs from direct inspection of the nature of things as disclosed in our immediate personal experience. There is no parting from your own shadow. To experience this faith is to know that in being ourselves we are more than ourselves: to know that our experience, dim and fragmentary as it is, sounds the utmost depths of reality: to know that detached details merely in order to be themselves demand that they should find themselves in a system of things: to know that this system includes the harmony of logical rationality, and the harmony of aesthetic achievement: to know that, while the harmony of logic lies upon the universe as an iron necessity, the aesthetic harmony stands before it as a living ideal moulding the general flux in its broken progress towards finer, subtler issues.[299]

Both Mumford and Whitehead find cosmic order through "direct inspection of the nature of things" as disclosed in their own personal experience at all levels. However, there appears to be a realism about Mumford's thought which sometimes may be lacking in that of Whitehead. Daniel Day Williams, for example, in God's Grace and Man's Hope, contends that in the Adventures of Ideas, Whitehead seems to opt for the inevitability of historical progress in the unfolding of the cosmic scheme. Whitehead states, in this book, that Plato is justified in his saying that "'The creation of the world--that is to say, the world of civilized order--is the victory of persuasion over force.'"[300] But events of the past several decades make it difficult to believe that there has in fact been movement away from force and toward persuasion. One could make a strong case for the opposite, as Mumford has done. Again, in the statement quoted at length above, Whitehead speaks of "broken progress." Williams questions this assumption, also, even though it

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[299]Alfred North Whitehead, Science and the Modern World, included in Alfred North Whitehead: An Anthology, selected by F.S.C. Northrop and Mason W. Gross, (New York: Macmillan Paperbacks, 1961), pp. 379-380.

[300]Alfred North Whitehead, Adventures of Ideas, quoted in God's Grace and Man's Hope, Daniel Day Williams, (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1949), p. 112.

is more modest than the other. He states that Whitehead's view of history has a "romantic overtone which goes beyond the facts."[301] Mumford, on the other hand, reflects more realism. For though he does believe there is a purposiveness to the universe and that there has indeed been forward movement in the unfolding of this purpose, this forward movement is now seriously threatened by man both misinterpreting and willfully denying that for which he has been created. In other words, there is no inevitability to human and cosmic progress but instead great contingency. Indeed, at this very moment, Mumford claims, man is on the verge of becoming post-historic man, a creature who denies himself the infinite potentialities open to him by overconcentration on specialized intellectualism in the pursuit of unqualified power. He is very near to destroying himself and the world he inhabits. Mumford's position appears to be closer to the facts than that of Whitehead!

Mumford concludes his case for the purposive nature of man and the cosmos by stating that finally, after all the evidence has been evaluated, "a large part of man's nature and destiny must be taken on faith."[302] He is willing to accept this faith commitment because operating on the basis of it he is able to make more sense out of his experience than he can otherwise. As I have stated in an earlier chapter, this faith commitment represents perhaps the major shift his thought has taken.

Let us turn now to Mumford's discussion of God. God, he says, is

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[301]Williams, God's Grace and Man's Hope, p. 113.

[302]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 70.

not, as religions have assumed, the cause and ground of existence but instead the end product of a long course of emergent evolution. For, he continues, as Buchenwald and Auschwitz illustrate quite clearly, if there is a loving God at the basis of all life, plainly he must be impotent. On the other hand, if he is omnipotent, truly responsible for all that happens in the universe, he can hardly be a loving God. "Such contradictions drive honest minds to atheism: the empty whirl and jostle of atoms becomes more kind to human reason than such a deity."[303]

One needs to question Mumford's assumptions at this point. He assumes that there are but two alternatives from which to choose: either that of an all-powerful God or that of an all-loving God, neither of which is satisfactory. One must ask Mumford why it is not possible to believe in a God who, though the ground of existence, still allows man the possibility of turning against Him in acts of disobedience. Such a God does not compel men to live in servitude to Him but instead seeks to persuade them to live as responsible sons. It is not necessary to conclude that Buchenwald and Auschwitz prove either the impotence of God nor His hatefulness. One can make the case instead that they illustrate the tragedy of man's sin. Mumford is not correct in assuming that the two alternatives he rightly rejects exhaust the possibilities of a God who is the ground of man's life.

In order to deal with the alleged contradictions of either an all-powerful or all-loving God, Mumford poses a rather unique hypothesis. He contends that, contrary to common religious belief, the universe does not issue forth from God according to some pre-ordained plan. Instead,

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[303] Ibid., p. 71.

God in the long processes of time emerges from the universe, "as the far-off event of creation and the ultimate realization of the person toward which creation seems to move."[304] In the earliest stages of the formative process, He is present to only a very limited degree and will be actualized fully at the very end. Mumford seems to identify God with what he calls the kingdom of God and sees Him as the ideal consummation of the whole creative process. In this view, he says, man's primary business is not mere contemplation of the divine but its active creation. This is not completely clear, however, because at the same time as he sees God at the end of the creative process, he can also say that God "is the pillar of fire by night that leads men onward in their journey toward the Promised Land."[305] It is difficult to see how a god who exists as the consummation of the creative process can at one and the same time be the pillar of fire by which men are guided to the promised land. But behind the confusion, Mumford appears to be groping for a position which includes both growth of the Divine and some purposive order which, while not totally pre-determined, does provide a rough criterion by which the unfolding universe might be judged. In this he stands in the tradition of both process philosophy and process theology. He does not seem to realize, however, that such a position presents a different alternative than either his vision of God as the "far-off event of creation" or those which he rejects. Further, it is one which appears to present more creative possibilities for development.

There appears to be a further confusion in his position because at the same time, as we have seen, that he posits an ingrained purpose-

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[304] Ibid.

[305] Ibid., p. 75.

fulness at the heart of the universe in which man participates but does not totally control, he can also say that the Divine is "begotten in the human soul."[306] This appears to be a reversion to a former period--a "purer" humanism in which man stands against an unfeeling universe in the way that Ahab stood against the Great White Whale. For if the Divine is begotten in the human soul, one is led to believe that the Divine was non-existent previous to the birth of the human soul. I do not believe Mumford wishes to say this. He states in various other places that the Divine is present in other forms of created life, and the person builds on these lower forms of the Divine as he moves to participation in the creation of higher forms.

It seems that what Mumford is saying is that there appear from time to time in man's consciousness fleeting visions of what life was meant to be. These are the result of many experiences--reflections on the lives of singularly prophetic figures (this will be developed in more detail at a later period in this chapter), dreams, and inexplicable intuitions. But however and whenever they do appear in man's consciousness, "he feels nearer to the purpose of his being than at any other moment in his life."[307] The experiences appear to be self-authenticating and in this sense are revelations from outside one's previous perceptual apparatus. Only later, as one acts on the basis of the new perceptions, are they affirmed or refuted by their ability to direct one to a fuller life. Thus, one of the lasting contributions which religion has made in the affairs of men, in Mumford's opinion, is that in its constant search for ultimate meaning beyond all appearances, it has kept man from closing

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[306] Ibid., p. 72.

[307] Ibid., p. 74.

himself to the impingement of the Divine upon his consciousness. Hopefully, one might add, it will not abandon its historic vocation.

A second major contribution of the major religions--and Mumford includes in this categorization Buddhism, Zoroastrianism, Christianity, Mithraism, Manichaeism, and Islam--is their continuing attempt to redefine and recast the human personality. They do this by concentrating on a prophetic figure who embodies in his person new personality mutations. The life that the prophet lives and the values which he espouses become a visible pattern for others to follow. The personal, Mumford continues, tends to take precedence over the social. But, one might ask, did not Buddhism, for example, deny the ultimate reality of the individual self? Mumford's reply is:

> Though his [Buddha's] analysis denied the reality of the "self," his own self became, ironically, a pattern for his followers to imitate. He could not by rational means do away with the deepest source of his own appeal.[308]

He seems to be saying that what the prophet says is not nearly so important as the total impact his life style makes on those he confronts.

Some of the common features which Mumford sees embodied in the great religious prophets are as follows: (1) an attempt to remove oneself from too close attachment to "man's animal nature": The prophet seeks to downplay every kind of "animal craving and desire" in order that he can focus his vision and life on "an existence of greater significance and beatitude."[309] (2) an attempt to emancipate oneself from social attachments: Mumford cites Buddha, Jesus, and Mani, for example, as turning their backs on the family. Also, the prophet detaches himself as

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[308]Mumford, The Transformations of Man, p. 59. [309]Ibid., p. 60.

much as possible from the responsibilities of the organized community--its law, government, economic operations, etc. In so doing he dismantles a great part of the civilized life of his time.

> In this new attitude toward one's fellows, in this emphasis on personal values that challenge the customs of society, the prophet seeks instead to bring about a new kind of community: the community of the "saved." Herein lies the great appeal of these axial religions to those who are disoriented or depressed by the hollowness of civilization's achievements. In forfeiting the goods of this world those who have found salvation seek to gain dominion over death itself: in giving up the goods of life they hope to achieve a greater good in eternity.[310]

(3) At first, the prophet and those who follow him rely upon the persuasiveness of the prophet's example. There is no attempt to impose the new image by force. The fact that men rally around the new man indicates that he represents in his person an aspect of human life which hitherto had not been adequately represented.[311]

In The Condition of Man, Mumford devotes an entire chapter to an analysis of Jesus' life and mission. Jesus is the only "founder" of a major religious movement, incidentally, which he treats in any detail. With this brief summary of Mumford's contention that a major purpose of the major religions is that of recapturing the human personality, we turn now to his depiction of Jesus. Significantly enough, the chapter is entitled "The Primacy of the Person." Jesus' "unique triumph," says Mumford, rests not on the typical explanations of Christian theology but instead on Jesus' assertion of the primacy of the person and a shift in interest from outer circumstances to inner values. Jesus' focusing of attention on the redemption of man's very humanity, on "the perpetual renewal and rededication of the living to the task of self-development,"

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[310] Ibid., p. 61. [311] Ibid.

struck a responsive chord in the ears of those about him. Jesus' mission was not to govern men but to release them.[312] Mumford's comparison of Jesus and Moses helps clarify his understanding of Jesus. He says that Moses worked on the person by way of the community. Man's life would be developed through observance of the community's laws. Jesus, however, reversed this process. He saw that the divine resident in man must be nourished through concentration on the person and his potentialities, that laws tend constantly to petrify and thus stultify man's possibilities. Mumford's analysis of this point has been influenced by that of Bergson, a name he mentions along with Emerson and Whitman.

According to Bergson, there are two kinds of moralities, the closed or static morality and the open or dynamic. The first is the morality of social obligation and arises from one's place in a given society. Since it is the morality of habit and custom, it follows a set pattern. The second form of morality, the open or dynamic morality, is not dictated by social obligation but instead is a spontaneous striving for an ideal good. The so-called moral heroes introduce this second morality. They have entered the stream of the vital impulse and drawn from it a creative energy. The attraction is such that ordinary men are caught up by this vision of the ideal and respond spontaneously to it.[313]

There are also, Bergson contends, two kinds of religion: closed and open. The first is a defensive social mechanism which attempts to maintain the status quo. The latter is that possessed by the religious genius who breaks away from the traditional and enters the vital impetus,

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[312] Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 54.

[313] Bergson, Two Sources of Morality and Religion, as summarised by Macquarrie in Twentieth Century Religious Thought, pp. 170-174.

the absolute energy of creation. By intuition, that is, by "instinct that has become disinterested, self-conscious, capable of reflecting upon its object and of enlarging it indefinitely," the religious genius re-relates himself and those whom he attracts to God. There is no guarantee that this open religion will not fall back into the rut of the closed type; but at its best, it is free and spontaneous and culminates in the mystical union of the soul with God.[314] One sees in Mumford's understanding of Jesus an interpretation very similar to that espoused by Bergson.

Mumford contends that Jesus' major concentration on releasing the divine resident in man is manifest in all aspects of Jesus' life. His major concern was to "disinter the corpse of men: to raise the dead."[315] Anything that stood in the way of furthering life in its perpetual process of self-transcendence and self-liberation was to be removed. Thus, Mumford continues, Jesus looked to children, for a child represents multiple potentialities for growth unstymied by the encumbrances of past experience; he advocated ridding oneself of all possessions and social ties if these stood in the way of transformation. Witness his advice to the rich young ruler and his break from family obligations. His authentic miracles had but one purpose--to make one whole in the fullest sense of that word. In this vein, Mumford contends that for too long the church has stressed the other-worldly quality of Jesus' emphasis on "eternal life." Instead, Mumford says, one must stress the here and now character of eternal life, one which is real at the moment one's life is transformed by Jesus' presence. Berdyaev's definition of eternal life is

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[314]Henri Bergson, Creative Evolution (New York: The Modern Library, 1944), pp. 186-187.

[315]Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 59.

close to what Mumford is contending for. Berdyaev states that when one objectifies and naturalizes eternal life, it then is conceived of as life in the world beyond, "different from ours."

> But eternal and immortal life regarded from within and not objectified is essentially different in quality from the natural and even the supernatural existence. It is a spiritual life, in which eternity is attained while still in time.[316]

Mumford would quarrel, however, with Berdyaev's sharp distinction between eternity and time or, what Berdaev calls elsewhere, existential and historical time. Whereas Berdyaev seems always to be moving between two worlds which pass each other constantly but never seem to meet, Mumford speaks instead of one world which sometimes, though seldom, rises to fulfill at least partially its ideal potentialities.

What happened to Jesus, the man, when he was taken over by the Christian Church? Mumford says he was turned quickly from Jesus, the man, to "the crucified God, a being born of the worshipper's own sick needs and ambivalent desires."[317] His followers, unfortunately, saw in him not an ideal image of themselves but instead a God who stood apart to be worshipped. The man was all too quickly enshrouded in myth. Further, his followers often missed the point of his message. They asked themselves:

> If one must become as a little child again, was not ignorance itself then a virtue, almost a passport to heaven? If mercy and love stand above political justice, why go through the forms of political justice...? And why cultivate mathematical or astronomical knowledge, if it leads to pride of learning and hardness of heart?[318]

This simplism misinterpreted the significance of Jesus' life. The witness of this life was <u>especially</u> important to those who studied science and to those who administered justice, in that it provided a corrective

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[316] Nicolas Berdyaev, <u>The Destiny of Man</u>, p. 57.

[317] Mumford, <u>The Condition of Man</u>, p. 57. [318] <u>Ibid</u>., p. 60.

to institutions which Jesus otherwise did not care to challenge. Mumford states that Jesus himself was partially responsible for the resultant social irresponsibility of the early church in that his own background was lacking in the sophistication which comes from "art and learning." But the point is that Jesus' followers, by misinterpreting the basic insight which Jesus' life expressed--that life is a perpetual process of self-transcendence and self-liberation--"drained off the precious lifeblood of His spirit, mumified His body, and wrapped what was left in many foreign wrappings."[319]

The strength of Mumford's interpretation of Jesus is that it points sharply to a truth at the heart of the Christian gospel--the ever-present possibility for renewal of life. No life is ever totally without hope of renewal for by confrontation with the life-transforming witness of Jesus of Nazareth one's health can be restored and the direction of his life shifted. One misses, however, in Mumford's analysis, the personal relationship which Jesus sustained with God and the way in which he argued that this relationship was necessary if the perpetual renewal about which Mumford speaks is to occur. This is to be seen in Jesus' use of the term "Father" when speaking of God, which implied for him an immediate presence. One thinks of his words, "Not one sparrow will fall to the ground without your Father's will. But even the hairs of your head are all numbered" (Matthew 10:29ff.), or again, "For your Father knows what you need before you ask Him" (Matthew 6:8), or again, "For your heavenly Father knows that you need them all" (Matthew 6:32). The emphasis here as throughout Jesus' life and teaching is on the strength which

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[319] Ibid., p. 63.

comes from God's immediate and continuing presence and the initiative He assumes on man's behalf.

The classic instance of this insofar as renewal of life is concerned is Jesus' parable of the Prodigal Son. The principal figure in this parable is the father. When the son demands his portion of the inheritance (thus treating his father as if he were already dead) in order to go off to a far land, his father grants it to him. He does not deny his son the freedom to choose. The son leaves and quickly squanders the inheritance in loose living. In order to live, he hires himself out as a swine herder. While in this miserable condition, he begins to think of his former home life. Acting on this memory of better times, he returns to his father, but even before he reaches home, his father sees him from a distance, has compassion upon him, runs and embraces him and kisses him. The father places no conditions in the way of his son's return but instead lavishes love unreservedly upon him. "Bring quickly the best robe, and put it on him, and put a ring on his feet; and bring the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and make merry, for this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found." (Luke 15:11ff.) The father accepted his son because this is what fatherhood implies and thus prepared the way for his son's rebirth of life and hope.

Jesus is saying in this parable that one can forsake God but God will not forsake man. He remains continually and immediately present and will take the initiative for reconciliation. Renewal is an ever-present possibility because God always seeks to restore man's broken relationship with Him. Paul Tillich defines the meaning of the symbol "father" in precisely this way. He says that 'father' is a symbol for God "insofar as he justifies man through grace and accepts him although he is unaccept-

able."[320] Mumford's interpretation of the life and mission of Jesus suffers in that he does not recognize Jesus' emphasis on the intimate relational character of renewal, the relationship of a loving and forgiving God to men.

As intimated earlier, Mumford believes that the Church, as it developed after Jesus' death, quickly distorted his life and teachings. This is a continuing danger of all institutions, for though dependent ultimately on the strength which comes from their founder, institutions tend by their very nature to take on a life of their own which at times their founder would hardly recognize.

However, lest one misinterpret Mumford's position regarding the relationship of personality to institution, it will be helpful to develop briefly his understanding of this ambiguous relationship.

Although he develops it with particular reference to Christianity and other historic religions, he states that it is applicable to the more general history of ideas, personalities, and institutions as well. Basically, there are four stages in the process: formulation, incarnation, incorporation, and embodiment. Formulation is the intuitive apprehension of a new idea in one or more minds. Incarnation, the next stage, involves the translation of the idea into the living form of a human being who manifests the idea. Following the incarnation, the next stage is incorporation within the community: the detailed working out of precept and belief in the habits of daily life in all its forms. Finally, embodiment is the structural organization of the original idea into works of art and technics. The first two steps in the process are mainly centered in the

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[320]Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, I (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1951), p. 287.

individual and the latter two center in the community. Both centers are necessary, for without formulation and incarnation of new mutants in the personality, creative efforts would not come forth; but without incorporation and embodiment, which carry on the process of transformation when the first prophetic illumination has dimmed, the new mutant would soon be lost to view. The problem, of course, is how one can embody it in such a way that the inevitable distortion is minimized. Further, if the original mutant is not to be lost as incorporation and embodiment proceed, periodically the natural order of growth must be reversed. For this to happen, a commanding reincarnation of the prophet must come forth who not only manifests once again the original intuitions but who also joins to "the original body of ideas the insight and knowledge that further human experience has disclosed."[321] In the Christian tradition Mumford points to Paul, Augustine, Bernard, St. Francis, Loyola, and Calvin, among others, as performing this particular role. In our day one might refer to Martin Luther King.

It is interesting to note what appears to be a lack of clarity in Mumford's position at this point. When he speaks about new mutants in the historical process, he does so in broad terms of new insights manifested by particular individuals, not only in terms of thought but in a very style of life. Jesus, for example, was important in the historical process, according to Mumford, not only because he gave flesh and blood to particular conceptions of what it means to be a man but because his life as a whole--his mind, will, and feelings--was integrated in a way seldom achieved by any other man. Indeed, his historical significance

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[321]Mumford, The Transformations of Man, pp. 75-79.

rests in the fact that by confrontation with him, one is given the possibility of redirecting his own life accordingly. Yet, when Mumford analyzes the process by which Jesus' life and witness is incorporated into a community, the full personhood of Jesus seems to fall into the background and he is seen as important merely because he incorporated new "ideas" in his personality. Mumford seems to be saying that first there is a new idea having a life of its own and then at some point this idea is embodied in a particular person. The full personhood of Jesus is lost in favor of ideas which he espoused. On the basis of Mumford's entire position, it appears very likely that he really does not mean to imply this, but his description of the so-called movement of an "idea" through the four stages does leave this an open question.

A third major contribution of the high religions, and one closely related to the second, is their drive toward universalism. One is reminded of Richard Niebuhr's statement specifically about the Christian faith that it "has been marked by the passion for universality."[322] Mumford contends that at a particular moment in the historical process, man seeks a new kind of self, one which though continuing to be conditioned by his biological and social roles is to a certain degree released from them. This new self is "directed toward a path of development that lies beyond mere racial continuity and tribal survival."[323] By an inner reorientation, man seeks to free himself from his own tribal group in order to become part of a larger universal society. This new self, the result of a

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[322]H. Richard Niebuhr, Radical Monotheism and Western Culture (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960), p. 62.

[323]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 93.

process which Mumford calls "the birth of the person," begins in the imagination and slowly integrates the life of the man. The significance of this development is that it makes possible the eventual emergence of a unified humanity. In this respect an increased individualism on the part of human beings is intimately related to an emerging universalism.

> With this change, man loosens his ties with blood and soil, which bound him to his limited past: all other men become his brothers, the world becomes his home, and the inner transformations of the person takes precedence over the shocks and challenges and chance stimuli that come from outer circumstances alone. First he is earth-conditioned: then group-conditioned: still largely the passive product of nature and culture. Finally, he achieves self-direction and propels himself toward a universal community.[324]

Mumford states that this goal of the universal community has been the major effort of the axial religions for the past three thousand years. He cites Bergson and Toynbee as giving the best recent descriptions of this effort. Actually, however, as he develops his position, the influence of Josiah Royce appears to be more pervasive at this point than either of the above two men. Indeed, the following statement of Royce's in The Problems of Christianity is central to his understanding:

> The office of religion is to aim toward the creation on earth of the Beloved Community, the future task of religion is the task of inventing and applying the arts which shall overcome their original hatefulness by the gracious love, not of mere individuals, but of communities. Now such arts are still to be discovered. Judge every social device, every proposed reform, every national and local enterprise, by the one test: Does this help toward the coming of the Universal Community?[325]

The great achievement of the axial religions is that in differing degrees they have initiated the vision of the universal community. Through them, the ancient isolations of tribe and village, state and na-

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[324] Ibid., p. 94.

[325] Josiah Royce, The Problems of Christianity, as quoted in The Conduct of Life by Lewis Mumford, pp. 116-117.

tion, have been overcome. "The dividing lines between the in-group and the out-group, between Jew and Gentile, between Greek and barbarian, between neighbor and foreigner, were effaced."[326] All men, regardless of background or status, can enter this new society, for all are children of one God, brothers and sisters in a single family. Obviously, none of the axial religions has fulfilled its vision. But the vision is of far-reaching significance because "it projected a destination far beyond that of archaic or civilized man, and conceived a new kind of person, capable of imagining and preparing for a universal community...."[327]

Historically, up to the time of "the birth of the person," Mumford states, the varying members of the community had no individual life of their own. Their identification was totally that of members of the group. With the exception of the community's god or the god's representative, the pharaoh or emperor, the attributes of autonomy, self-transformation, selectivity, and freedom were lacking. However, at particular points in the historical process, especially in the emergence of the great religious prophets, a transformation occurs within the life span of a single individual. This person no longer defines himself according to his racial or tribal inheritance. Mumford states: "He belongs in fact to a new and singular species that has never hitherto had a local habitation: he is a person."[328] He still loves his place of birth but the world has become his home. He creates in his person a universally human mode of thinking and acting and thus leaves on a few minds, at least, an impression which they cannot erase. For they have at last seen "a Man."

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[326]Mumford, The Transformations of Man, p. 64. [327]Ibid., p. 64.

[328]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 95.

"With this avatar of universal Man, this second birth, a new stage of development opens for humanity at large."[329] But for this to take root, the time must be ripe. Following Toynbee closely at this point, Mumford states that the new universal consciousness seems to occur, almost without exception, in a Time of Troubles. Only when individuals and communities have experienced an unusual series of misfortunes or frustrations are they willing to take part in the broadening of the consciousness. The prophet is ignored in good times. "Only out of despair," it appears, can new hope and new visions and new dispensations find acceptance. Mumford believes that such is our present age, out of which will come either a purer form of universal man or universal destruction. It may be, he states, that at this very moment, in differing areas around the world, new prophets are arising who will lead men to this purer universalism toward which the axial religions have pointed us.

What should be religion's future direction? Mumford's answer to this question will occupy the remaining pages of this chapter. Mumford begins his discussion by acknowledging the current hope that traditional religion--particularly Christianity--if it once recaptured the hearts of men, might serve to redirect the demoralized energies of Western civilization. His mood in Faith for Living leads one to think he actually gave this position serious consideration at one point. But, he continues, it is now clear that no "crystallized orthodoxy," seeking to recover ground it once occupied in the historical scene, is equal to the present challenge. Before any existing body of beliefs can become effective, it must

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[329] Ibid., p. 96.

do two things: (1) absorb fresh elements that Western civilization has brought to the world over the past three centuries, and (2) "detach itself from the institutional forms that now limit their power and usefulness."[330] The way of renewal for religion is the way of disembodiment, detachment, disenchantment, and finally withdrawal of interest from the existing society. "In that state, naked and alone, the spirit may rise to new illuminations and achieve a new center of growth."[331] Religion, Mumford is saying in essence, represents many vital impulses necessary to the good life. But these will be preserved only if religion is willing to strip away the many unnecessary impediments. He lists these as, among others, buildings and rituals, prudent attachments to the wealthy and worldly, ancient dogmas which defy reason. His position is actually a secular version of that attempted by Adolph Harnack in What is Christianity? Harnack was attempting to get to the central core of the Christian faith by stripping off layer after layer of husk. Mumford is attempting to strip away layer after layer of various religions and indeed all other ideologies to get to the central core of what it means to be a man. When the stripping away has gone far enough, he is convinced that an inner core will be reached out of which fresh growth can take place. The following quotation provides an especially good insight into his positive program:

> When the process has gone far enough, those who keep their purpose will reach an inner core. At that point, the possibility of unity and common action will exist. Only from this inner nodule can fresh growth take place; and only by this stripping down of the collective ego, to a point where there is neither white nor black, male nor female, Christian nor Hindu, Theosophist nor Marxian Communist, can a fresh start be made."[332]

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[331] Ibid., p. 113. [332] Ibid.

One can applaud Mumford's desire to strip the religious tradition of its manifold impediments in order to bring about the renewal he is seeking. His desire is echoed by James A. Pike who views his task in theology as that of moving "toward fewer beliefs and more belief."[333] However, Mumford's statement quoted immediately above appears to have within it the same dangers that he detected in Emerson's response to his friend, "No law can be sacred to me but that of my nature." The reader will remember that Mumford criticized this statement by noting that Emerson failed to take account of the fact that what he believed was a purely spontaneous and unlearned reaction--was, in fact, the reaction of one whose superego had been formed by his clergy ancestors. Mumford's own prescription is open to criticism for the very same reasons. For if what Mumford calls the "collective ego" is formed, at least in part, by the history a man inherits, the process of husking is a very dangerous one. One needs some criteria by which he retains that which has permanent value and that which is disposable, and this criteria is itself forged in the historical process. One simply cannot depend on his "nature" to provide it because, as Mumford pointed out in criticizing Emerson, this "nature" is itself historically conditioned. As we have seen in chapter four, Mumford is well aware of this. He castigates contemporary society for its ahistorical thinking and looks to historical models as criteria for judgment. He simply failed to take this insight into account in this instance.

A similar criticism can be made of his statement that the path to religion's renewal is that of ultimate withdrawal of interest from the

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[333]James A. Pike, "Fewer Beliefs, More Belief...," Center Diary: 14, (September/October, 1966), p. 42.

existing society so that naked and alone the spirit may rise to new illuminations. This prescription again runs contrary to Mumford's better judgments elsewhere. To be sure, withdrawal is essential for life but not "withdrawal of interest." Indeed, one withdraws because of interest in his society. He withdraws so that he can think creatively and prepare himself to respond positively to the agenda which society presented to him before his withdrawal. Man is an historical creature. His spirit is never naked but clothed with his past and his present. Withdrawal cannot unclothe him but it can help him to look clearly at the clothes he wears in order to see if a new style is needed. This is true also for the religious tradition. It cannot become naked because it carries its past with it wherever it goes. It has already discovered that withdrawal of interest in its society is not the way of renewal. Indeed, this is one of its primary problems at the moment. Whatever withdrawal it undertakes, it should not be withdrawal of interest but purposeful withdrawal--in order to return with new insight into the society it seeks to serve.

In order to clarify Mumford's position on the nature of Christianity and particularly Christianity's future, it is helpful to review his criticism of the thought of Arnold Toynbee. He has great respect for Toynbee's thought and has drawn much from it. He says, for example, in a 1954 review of Volumes VII-X of A Study of History that "the glory of Toynbee's work...is that his is perhaps the first mind that has done something like justice to its [human history's] complexity and mystery"[334] and compares his accomplishment to that of Augustine and Ibn Khaldun.

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[334]Lewis Mumford, "The Napoleon of Notting Hill," The New Republic, (November 8, 1954), p. 15.

But despite his appreciation for Toynbee's work, he finds himself at odds with it in several crucial respects.

In 1951, before the appearance of Volumes VII-X of Toynbee's monumental A Study of History had appeared, he stated that his first disagreement with Toynbee rests in the fact that Toynbee assumed the Christian faith to be the only true faith and that Jesus is the only god who ever assumed human form. Mumford obviously would take exception to this position on two counts: (1) that religions other than Christianity had insights into reality and thus Christianity did not possess the uniqueness which Toynbee claimed for it; and (2) that Jesus was not radically discontinuous with other men. His life represented a new mutation in the historical process but he was simply manifesting a potential open to all human beings. In 1954, after Volumes VII-X had appeared, Mumford sees his position and that of Toynbee's as moving closer together, in that he says in Volume VII that Toynbee no longer regards Christianity as "the sole source of true salvation, radically different, through the fact that Jesus was indeed God incarnate."[335] Instead, Mumford continues, Toynbee now accords an almost equal degree of efficacy to the other great revelations.

A second criticism of Toynbee which Mumford makes is what he calls Toynbee's "naive dualism." He sees Toynbee's position as one-sided spiritualism in the same way that much of modern life and thought is one-sided materialism. Toynbee's dualistic metaphysics and theology, he continues, run like a deep fissure through his entire position. "Matter and Spirit, External and Inner, Macrocosm and Microcosm, Society and the in-

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[335] Ibid., p. 17.

dividual soul--these oppositions and antinomies are treated by him as if they in fact were exclusive and separate."[336] Mumford contends, instead, that these are not separate but are diverse aspects of a dynamic, holistic, unified process. The mind falsely separates but in reality the separation is overcome.

The result of Toynbee's position, Mumford continues, is that meaning and value and form emerge only when the hampering body has been minimized or left behind. Meaning exists for Toynbee only in a final act of transfiguration which brings one close to God. This becomes possible only when life in this world is shattered and desperate. Thus, in this view, every formative or creative moment in civilization or in personal existence serves not as a partial revelation of the Ultimate but instead as a postponement of man's final happiness, a happiness which emerges only when man renounces the hope of any earthly felicity. Mumford states that this position ends up being a restatement of orthodox Augustinianism. While acknowledging that Toynbee's otherworldly resolution may be pragmatically justified by modern man's insane behavior, an adequate philosophical solution is one which looks for resolution not in another world but in the transformation of the present one.

A third criticism of Toynbee's position relates to Toynbee's assumption that Western civilization, since the dissolution of the medieval synthesis, has been merely duplicating the errors which brought Hellenic civilization to its ruin. Mumford views this as an error of historical analysis and says bluntly, "there is simply no parallel."[337] For, Mumford continues, whereas Hellenic civilization declined into world weari-

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[336] Ibid. [337] Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 114.

ness and a waning of its energies, the period following the collapse of the medieval synthesis has suffered increasingly from an unfortunate misuse of what are essentially creative and positive forces. The period between 1400 and 1900 was characterized by an extraordinary outburst of human energy which unfortunately was placed in the service of power-intoxicated and value-starved men. As we have seen in chapter three, Mumford believes it is only since the Nineteenth Century triumph of utilitarian man, and even more since the First World War, that the direction of Western civilization has become unambiguously negative. He believes that the problems "Toynbee forces himself to read into the earlier centuries of 'modern Western civilization' did not exist until a much later period."[338]

It should be said that Mumford's own position appears to be ambiguous at this point. For although it is true that in all his analyses of the post-medieval period he pays tribute to the creative energies unleashed, he seems to vacillate as to when these energies were corrupted. At times he seems to see the situation as essentially negative from the very beginning, needing only time to unfold ultimate implications; whereas at other times, such as in this criticism of Toynbee, he makes a more radical distinction between the long period preceding the First World War and the rather short period between then and the present.

However that might be, the point of Mumford's criticism is that since the parallel between post-Hellenic civilization and post-medieval civilization is a forced one, the attempted prescription which Toynbee gives for renewal, in which he looks to the early church for guidance, is questionable. Further, though many of the negative conditions that once

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[338] Ibid., p. 115.

made Christianity imperative are in fact present today, the same basis for reintegration no longer exists. For Christianity is no longer a fresh form as it was when it confronted classic society. Rather it is a survival and "survivals, in the nature of things, lack the dynamic force of mutants."[339]

One can agree with Mumford that Christianity will probably never again be the integrating force in civilization. In an age of increasing pluralism, rather than being an integrator it is more likely that the Christian faith will, along with other life styles, contribute whatever insights it has into the nature of reality. In the process, hopefully, it will serve to correct other positions and be corrected by them. Two prime recent examples of this phenomenon are the developing dialogues between Christianity and the religions of the East, and between Christianity and Communism. Already these dialogues are bringing about subtle but important changes in all involved. But simply because Christianity will not be the great integrating force which it once was does not mean, as Mumford seems to imply, that it cannot be an effective world force for renewal! Christianity need not merely be a "survival." Mutants can occur within traditions which bring new life to these traditions. In the Christian tradition one can point to the Protestant Reformation as one example of this process. It may be, for example, that the Glock-Stark survey does reflect the beginning of the end for Christianity. But it may reflect instead a "Time of Troubles" for Christianity out of which a life more applicable to the present and future yet related to the past may emerge. A new reformation may be possible. The next few decades

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[339] Ibid., p. 116.

will tell.

Mumford concludes his discussion of religion by contending that no longer is it possible to look for a simple transforming agent but instead

> ...for millions upon millions of them, in every walk of society, in every country: a democratic transformation, dispersed and widespread, to replace those centralized and authoritarian images which would today...be either ineffectual or tyrannous.[340]

For although no one mind can impart his own dynamic of renewal to a world hovering on the edge of the abyss, a wholesale quickening of many minds might make this possible. Thus, the task and sacrifice of the individual Messiah now devolves equally on all men.

World renewal, he continues, is possible. The dream of transformed men and transformed society can be achieved. What is needed?

> Faith in the dream itself; for the very ability to dream is the first condition of the dream's realization....The new age will begin when a sufficient number of men and women in every land and culture take upon themselves the burden men once sought to transfer to an Emperor, a Messiah, a dictator, a single God-like man...if each one of us, in his own full degree, accepts this desperate condition for survival, that which seemed a threat to man's further development will be transformed into a dynamic opportunity.[341]

These last two paragraphs seem to vitiate Mumford's own understanding of the decisive transforming power of a particular prophetic figure around whom others rally and in whose presence lives are dramatically changed. Mumford's own historical analysis has led him to the conclusion that decisive changes have occurred when individuals have been drawn to a particular life style as manifested in a single individual. But his proposal for renewal in the Twentieth Century seems to fly in the

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[340] Ibid., p. 118.

[341] Ibid., p. 120.

face both of this analysis and of statements made elsewhere. He proposes that concentration on prophetic figures should now cease and that each man accept the burden of his own renewal by turning "the light of the lantern inward upon himself."[342] Each person's renewal is, in effect, self-generated. This proposal is not at all convincing. Mumford does not appear at this point to be taking history seriously. For if, as he argues, historical experience indicates that decisive personal and social transformations have occurred historically when men have been confronted by a compelling personality, one has good reason to believe that further transformations will continue to occur in a similar way. It appears that very few men are able to remove themselves sufficiently from the presuppositions of their society in order that they might bring to the society a more humane way of life. Very few of us are granted the new intuitions about which Mumford speaks.

Instead, creative breakthroughs are the contributions of a very limited number of prophetic figures. Thus, if we take Mumford's analysis of historical mutations seriously, we will not turn away from the few such figures who emerge, but will seek instead to find new ways in which men might be confronted decisively by them. Insofar as the Christian faith is concerned, for example, it has a primary responsibility at this very moment to find ways in which Jesus of Nazareth can confront contemporary man in a convincing way. His life style needs visibility in a period of history when Nietschian man and "economic" man seem to have captured the imaginations of men. Hopefully, through such confrontations, the criteria for contemporary man's definition of manhood will be altered.

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[342] Ibid., p. 119.

CHAPTER VI

A DOCTRINE OF THE WHOLE

Thus far, in developing Mumford's positive program for renewal, we have seen him turn for guidance to particular historical periods--especially to ancient Athens and Transcendentalist New England--and to the contributions of the great religions. In this final chapter I will attempt to build on the base provided by the preceding chapters and present in as concise form as possible his Concept of the Person. In doing so, Mumford's ideal man, the balanced personality, will emerge, as will two men he believes have manifested this ideal in our time--Albert Schweitzer and Patrick Geddes. Secondly, I will sketch Mumford's proposal for bringing to fruition the ideal envisioned, and finally I will comment critically upon his proposals.

He begins by stating that, thus far, all attempts for personal and social renewal have failed because of their partial character. This is true of socialism, world federalism, the great religions, and many other current programs of reform one can conceive. Each of these has contributions to make, but until an organic interrelationship can be achieved which will incorporate them into a more inclusive concept of the person, they are bound to fail.

> The field for reformation is not this or that particular institution, but our whole society: that is why only a doctrine of the whole, which rests on the dynamic intervention of the human person in every

stage of the process, will be capable of directing it.[343]

He states in The Conduct of Life that Marxism, particularly as espoused by Friedrich Engels, has come closer than any other system in Western thought to a doctrine of the whole capable of doing justice to the nature of organisms, societies, and human personalities. This is so, not because of Marx's "vulgar materialism," but because of his original Hegelian perception of the underlying unity of natural and social processes in their continuous evolution and transformation. Hegel had taught Marx correctly that the world is in a constant process of becoming--the result of a struggle between opposites, in which a positive "thesis" begets its "antithesis" and in the course of the struggle creates a higher unity, a new "synthesis." Therefore, whatever success "Marxism has actually had in the world has been partly due to the confidence and resolution that the very idea of such a possibility of unity gives to the reader...."[344]

Marx, of course, turned Hegel on his head. For whereas Hegel contended that "ideas" generated the material forms and institutions of actual life, Marx contended that it was the material forms, particularly those of production and exchange, which generated such things as art, philosophy, and morals. These latter, in other words, were, according to Marx, mere shadows of the real world which was governed not by ideas but by the world of economic activity. Here, however, lay one of Marx's basic errors. For if he had understood that his position complemented that of Hegel rather than supplanted it, he would have, in Mumford's words, "created a sociological synthesis of the first order, insofar as history can be comprehended in the exclusive terms of the dialectical process."[345]

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[343]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 224. [344]Ibid., p. 225.

[345]Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 331.

But by holding that "material relations are the basis of all relations," he confused "basis" with "cause" and "reason."

Further, Marx's historical analysis was faulty. Mumford quotes Engel's farewell eulogy at Marx's burial as highlighting this error. Engel's statement was as follows:

> Marx discovered the law of evolution in human history: the simple fact, previously hidden under ideological growths, that human beings must first of all eat, drink, shelter and clothe themselves before they can turn their attention to politics, science, art, and religion.[346]

Mumford disagrees with this statement and argues instead that in actual history, politics, art, and religion arise at least as early as those aspects of man's life which relate to his physical existence. In society, he continues, both aspects of life are organically related, neither preceding the other.

> Marx was correct in saying that all of man's ideal creations have a material basis: he was wrong in confusing "basis" with "cause" and he was doubly wrong in not realizing that all of man's material achievements have, likewise, an ideal basis.[347]

In The Myth of the Machine, written more than twenty years after the above-quoted statement was made, he sets out to prove this contention. In this book, arguing against the theory that man is primarily a tool-using animal, he sees man as pre-eminently a mind-making, self-mastering, and self-designing animal. Those objects which man uses to clothe and feed and house himself (technics) are used to further this process but they are subsidiary to the broader conceived purpose. Indeed, Mumford argues that historically "man's inventions...were less for the purpose of

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[346]Friedrich Engels, Quoted in The Condition of Man by Lewis Mumford, p. 331.

[347]Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 331.

increasing the food supply or controlling nature than for utilizing his own immense organic resources and expressing his latent potentialities...."[348] Break-throughs in technics result from man's continuing attempts at self-transformation and are useful so long as they serve this purpose. It was only with the advent of our present power-driven age that technics was dissociated from the larger cultural whole in which man, as man, has always functioned. At its historic point of origin, technics was related to the whole nature of man and thus was "broadly life-centered, not work-centered or power-centered. As in any other ecological complex, varied human interests and purposes, different organic needs, restrained the overgrowth of any single component."[349] Operating in such an organic relationship, technics supported and enlarged the capacities for human expression but did not dominate. Our present period, on the other hand, knows no such organic wholeness and thus technics has become an end in itself divorced from ultimate human goals.

Two further criticisms of Marx by Mumford need to be recorded: (1) Marx assumed that all change was of a dialectical nature. Actually, however, there are numerous other forms of development, including maturation, mimesis, mutual aid. Thus, in failing to take note of these, Marx turned his back on a great deal of human history.[350] (2) A final criticism, and one which throws a clear light on Mumford's Concept of the Person, is that Marxism ultimately buries the person in society. For instead of realizing, Mumford contends, that the person is a higher emergent from the community, Marxism personifies the community and endows

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[348]Mumford, The Myth of the Machine, p. 8. [349]Ibid., p. 9.

[350]Mumford, The Condition of Man, pp. 331-332.

only its leaders with the true attributes of persons.[351] Mumford, on the other hand, is desirous of developing full personhood in each individual; for it is in this way, he believes, that ultimately true community can be established. Thus, while Marxism points to the unity needed, it ultimately fails because of the above-listed limitations.

Mumford looks also to James Clerk Maxwell's doctrine of Singular Points. Briefly stated, Maxwell's thesis is that science is organized to study continuities and stabilities and selects by preference those fields where these attributes are significantly dominant. Occasionally, however, the scientist comes upon so-called unpredictable moments when continuities are disrupted, when a small force may produce, not a commensurately small result, but one of far greater magnitude. But though this is true in the physical world, he continues, it is even more true in personal and social affairs. At particularly crucial points in human history, the human personality may produce an effect out of all proportion to its physical powers in the same way that a tiny seed-crystal, dropped into a saturate solution, may cause the entire mass to assume a similar crystalline form. Mumford agrees with this insight and builds further upon it.

The individual Person, he claims, precipitates change in the social order by initiating first within himself "a profound regrouping of forces and ideal goals."[352] At this moment he represents the whole and in turn effects the whole. As we have seen in the previous chapter, Mumford uses the great religious prophets as prime examples of this phenomenon. But in order for one to take accurate account of the phenomenon, he must view human personality as central at all levels. Even that which

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[351]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 225 ff. [352]Ibid., p. 228.

science calls "nature" or the "external world" is at least in part a projection of the human personality, "modified by its capacities and its needs and its cultural forms." Therefore...

> Instead of beginning with nature and eliminating, as far as possible, the operations of the personality, we must begin with the human personality, as the most inclusive and complete of all observable phenomena, since every other kind of force and event can be mirrored in it and interpreted by it; and we must pay particular attention to those kinds of events that are not patent in the more stable and repetitious cycles of nature.[353]

Mumford quotes William James to the effect that:

> The only complete category of our thinking...is the category of personality....And this systematic denial on science's part of personality as a condition of events, this vigorous belief that in its own essential and innermost nature our world is a strictly impersonal world, may...prove to be the very defect that our descendents will be most surprised at in our boasted science....[354]

Mumford agrees with this contention without reservation.

Carl G. Jung, in a similar vein, contends that "today we can no longer get along unless we give our best attention to the ways of the psyche."[355] He is convinced that this is happening. The deep uncertainty of modern man is producing an awakening interest in man's psychic life. Obviously, he continues, there has never been a time in the history of men when the psyche did not manifest itself in one way or another. Formerly, however, it attracted little attention, "people got along without heeding it."[356] But today a renewed interest is developing because man, no longer convinced that he can find meaning in the outer world, is look-

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[353] Ibid., p. 229.

[354] William James, Quoted in The Conduct of Life by Lewis Mumford, p. 229.

[355] C. G. Jung, Modern Man in Search of a Soul (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World, 1966), p. 201.

[356] Ibid.

ing for it in his psychic life.

Mumford is not so certain as Jung, apparently, that this new interest is widespread. But he is convinced that such interest is of utmost importance. As we have already observed, he readily acknowledges the increased understanding of the external world resulting from centuries of concentration of this nature. But because of the disparagement of the personal which has accompanied this concentration, man now tends toward a view of the external world in which man's own hopes and goals are depreciated. Therefore, a new concept of the person is called for, "one which will not infringe in arbitrary fashion on scientific order, but will do justice to forces and potentialities that still lie beyond it."[357] In this way the continuities of nature will be united with the "briefest incarnation of divinity" and seen as aspects of one inter-related and progressively integrating whole. At the heart of the process will be man himself as the interpreter and director of the forces which have brought him into existence. Whereas today man is increasingly allowing himself to be transformed into an automaton, a new concept of the person will once again place man in control of the evolutionary process.

We are now at the center of Mumford's Concept of the Person. It will be helpful at this point to attempt to isolate those characteristics which seem to lie at the heart of this position. (1) Basic to the position is the starting point which is "man himself, at the fullest point of his own development, his emergence into a person."[358] At least since the breakdown of the medieval synthesis, Mumford states, the starting point

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[357]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 230. [358]Ibid., p. 241.

for inquiry has not been man but the physical universe. This being the case, in a period when mechanistic physics dominated scientific thinking, as we have seen in chapter three, much of real experience was reduced to those aspects of experience which lent themselves to accurate factual information and generalized statements. Increasingly, the subjective was dismissed as unreal, and the unseen and immeasurable regarded as non-existent. Intuition and feeling did not effect mechanical process or mechanical explanations. Art, poetry, organic rhythm, and fantasy were deliberately and progressively eliminated so that as the outer world of perception increased in significance, the inner world of feeling became increasingly impotent. This concept of the physical universe is now in the process of changing. Mumford states that "the new astronomers and physicists" are speculating as to whether or not creation may be a continuous process, "perhaps the primordial one, while what we once regarded as the 'real' world, with its stabilities and regularities, may be only a relatively inert residue--the detritus of this creative process."[359]

But in order to take full advantage of this broader understanding, man himself has to move to center stage. He must become the starting point of all inquiry.

> A world built up conceptually from the atom might remain forever in fragments and unfinished sequences: in such a world, if uncorrected by a theory of organic development, even the phenomena of life might seem disjointed and accidental, without direction, without ultimate value. Whereas a world penetrated downward from the person begins with the fact of integration, with values and goals already embodied and incarnated. From that beginning one may interpret otherwise dispersed and aimless events in the light of the goal toward which they have moved and achieved conscious existence. Such a world assumes no pre-established harmony and no fixed destination. What it reveals is a multitude of organic patterns, which, in relation to further human designs, become cumulatively significant. The increase of creativity

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[359] Ibid.

becomes accordingly man's measure of his success in life.[360]

The beginning point of any inquiry, then, is the human person--his history, his present, and his projected future. In a sense, the human person becomes a filter through which all inquiry is required to pass. The person holds together in his consciousness a meaningful world and in this way seeks to transform by continuing effort ever wider reaches of life in accordance with that consciousness.

(2) A second basic characteristic of Mumford's Concept of the Person is the way in which he attempts to bring together varying insights in order to formulate a conception of man's nature and destiny. The basic approach is that of broad synthesis and that of consciously raising to the forefront of men's thinking those aspects of human nature which have been ignored or underplayed in recent centuries. The preceding chapters have specifically attempted to isolate men and movements on which Mumford has drawn. We have noted, for example, the influence of the Christian doctrine of sin on his thought by way of Reinhold Niebuhr; the influence of Rousseau's attempt to move behind the arid rituals of an over-refined civilization to a simpler and more integrated life as well as his emphasis on education as self-liberation; the models of life presented by Fifth Century Athens and Nineteenth Century Transcendentalist New England, each of which presents in its own way a life form in which all aspects of life look beyond themselves toward a more inclusive unity; and, finally, the crucial role of the world's religions which have continually driven men to raise questions concerning ultimate purpose, which have a built-in drive toward universality, and which have laid primary

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[360]Mumford, The Transformations of Man, p. 183.

emphasis on the regeneration of the human person. All of these insights, Mumford feels, along with fantastic achievements of the sciences need to be incorporated into a broader synthesis.

One further major influence needs to be mentioned at this time--that of Sigmund Freud. In an address given in Washington in 1954, Mumford stated that

> ...thanks to Sigmund Freud, our age has discovered and re-established the inner world: the world of fantasy and dreams, that spontaneous fountain of free creativity, in which nothing is probable because everything is possible, a world in which the demonic and angelic are forever at war.[361]

Mumford states that Freud, more than any other single individual, recovered for objective research the vast subjective world which science had denied for centuries. Through Freud, the world of dreams became a starting point of that self-realization through which man passes from the pleasurable illusions of infancy to the mastered realities of maturity.

Mumford builds on this insight particularly in The Conduct of Life and The Myth of the Machine and states that often man's dream life has been overlooked by scholars enumerating traits which differentiate man from other animals. He notes, for example, that the word "dream" does not occur once in the index of the three-volume symposium on Biological and Human Evolution. According to Mumford, man's dream life is marked off from that of other animals by the fact that:

> ...it spreads from his nocturnal to his daytime life: in waking moments the dream mingles increasingly with his vocalizing, manipulating, soliloquizing, playing, and at a very early date it leaves a mark on his whole behavior, for man's religious development with its significant 'other world' is inseparable from the dream.[362]

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[361] Mumford, In the Name of Sanity, p. 147.

[362] Mumford, The Myth of the Machine, p. 49.

It is in the unconscious that creativity begins, and by way of the dream this creativity receives its first manifestation. Thus, one ignores this vast pool of creative energy at his peril. In reopening this world to investigation, Freud has contributed greatly to human development.

Although Mumford is heavily indebted to Freud, he also is highly critical. The criticism centers primarily on what he calls Freud's and his followers' over-reaction to the repressive nature of Nineteenth Century society's attitude toward man's subjective world, particularly that relating to sexual expression. Freud assumed that since repression was a basic cause of mental illness, unlimited expression might be an adequate preventive in certain cases. The id, particularly among his followers, was given increasingly unlimited expression at the expense of the super-ego. Mumford states that whereas for Freud the object of psychotherapy was to "strengthen the ego and make it more independent of the super-ego" (Freud's words), Mumford sees the super-ego as an organic part of the whole self. "The object of sound development is to effect a working harmony between the three operative parts of the personality, thus doing away with abrasive conflicts and disruptions."[363] In this approach Mumford has been influenced by the work of Henry A. Murray.

Freud's followers have assumed, Mumford continues, that since the demands of the super-ego were the cause of perpetual tension within the personality, they should be removed. This folly has grave consequences because such reasoning leads ultimately to a rejection of "all the ideal claims that culture makes upon the personality." Apparently equating culture, social claims, and super-ego, Mumford contends that social claims

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[363]Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 424.

on the personality are healthy in that they serve as a continuing brake on the ego's self-assertion. Thus, once the ego's needs and desires are separated from society's demands, no criteria for selection remains. "Social claims must balance personal needs as duties balance rights: otherwise the self becomes de-socialized, if not actively anti-social. Unlimited self-assertion leads to the destruction of personality."[364] Tension between id and super-ego is necessary so that creative energy unleashed in the id can make its contribution to an ever-unfolding vision of life. But despite Mumford's criticism of Freud and those who have followed him, Freud's contribution to Mumford's thought in opening the unconscious has been profound. Thus, the synthesis of thought Mumford is attempting includes much that can be traced directly to Sigmund Freud.

(3) The third characteristic of the Concept of the Person is the criterion to be used in determining what it means to be a man--that of balance. For without balance and wholeness, human renewal will not occur and self-transcendence will be stifled. The ideal personality for the opening age, Mumford contends, "is a balanced personality: not the specialist but the whole man."[365] In a section entitled "The Fallacy of Systems" he makes the point that every attempt to contain the varied nature of life within a single set of consistent principles is self-defeating since no system can contain the varied nature of all life. Since the Seventeenth Century we have been living in an age of system-makers and system-appliers. He mentions the romantics, utilitarians, the capitalists, the communists and others as examples. Each system has tried to operate on the basis of one primary operating principle. But life is not like that. Rather,

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[364] Ibid., p. 365.

[365] Ibid., p. 419.

> ...it is the nature of life to embrace and surmount all its contradictions, not by shearing them away, but by weaving them into a more inclusive unity. No organism, no society, no personality, can be reduced to a system or be effectually governed by a system.[366]

Thus, a basic thesis of Mumford's is a skepticism of all systems. His affirmation instead is that of organic life. In sum:

> If no single principle will produce a harmonious and well-balanced existence, for either the person or the community, then harmony and balance perhaps demand a degree of inclusiveness and completeness sufficient to nourish every kind of nature, to create the fullest variety in unity, to do justice to every occasion. That harmony must include and resolve discords: it must have a place for heresy as well as adjustment--and vice-versa. And that balance must maintain itself against sudden thrusts and impulsions: like the living organism, it must have reserves at its command, capable of being swiftly mobilized, wherever needed to maintain a dynamic equilibrium.[367]

This is the broad criterion which Mumford uses in determining the personality needed to live life as it is meant to be lived. We will proceed at this point to attach flesh to this skeletal structure.

All of life, Mumford contends, rests essentially on the continuing reconciliation of two opposite states: "stability and change, security and adventure, necessity and freedom."[368] Without regularity and continuity one could neither recognize change nor have any basis for determining if this change were creative or destructive. Without change life would stagnate and self-transformation would cease. Thus the aim of an organic education, according to Mumford, is the achievement of balance without at the same time retarding growth and to promote growth without permanently upsetting balance. Further, one must constantly be on guard so that that growth which is achieved does not favor one aspect of the personality at the expense of all others. As we have seen in chapter two,

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[366] Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 179.

[367] Ibid., p. 180.

[368] Ibid., p. 181.

man's problem in recent centuries, particularly in the Twentieth, has been that he has done precisely this. He has overdeveloped his intelligence at the expense of all else and thus is in critical danger of having this intelligence turn against him.

Obviously, the ideal of the balanced personality constantly eludes the grasp. Mumford states that in the long history of men it is a rarity even as an ideal. He believes that the conception was probably first put forth by the Chinese in the person and teachings of Confucius. But as we have seen in chapter three, it was the Greeks of the Fifth Century B.C., who arrived at the most mature expression of the balanced person. Mumford quotes Plato's words in The Laws as instructive:

> If anyone gives too great power to anything, too large a sail to a vessel, too much food to the body, too much authority to the mind, and does not observe the mean, everything is overthrown, and in the wantonness of excess runs in the one case to disorders, and in the other to injustice, which is the child of excess.[369]

Unfortunately, however, this classic doctrine of balance suffered from its static quality. The Greeks sought security without adventure and stability at the expense of change. Thus, not enough aware of the dynamic quality of all life, they forgot that a final definition of what it means to be a man is a contradiction in terms, since it is man's very nature to continually transcend himself. Mumford, on the other hand, is searching for what he calls a "dynamic balance."

> ...that of the fountain, endlessly changing, though within the pattern of change retaining its form. Even the figure of the fountain is inadequate to describe organic forms, for dynamic balance itself undergoes shifts and changes through the cumulative effects of memory and through the further effects of time and fresh events and new purposes on maturation and growth.[370]

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[369] Plato, Quoted in The Condition of Man by Lewis Mumford, p. 419.

[370] Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 183.

In Mumford's view, then, the Greeks erred in conceiving balance as an end in itself rather than pointing beyond itself to the ultimate purpose of life--growth in freedom and self-transcendence. One seeks balance, according to Mumford, not for its own sake but because balance is the means by which such growth can occur.

The growth of a mechanistic culture over the last three centuries with its stress on specialized labor has increasingly narrowed the province of the individual man. He has become a competent specialist in a very limited field and increasingly non-conversant with that which lies beyond this area of specialization. Although this development began in the factory, it has since spread to all other areas so that men have become not merely "fragments of men, but...fragments of fragments."[371] Mumford builds on Nietzsche's description of narrow specialists as "inverted cripples" and states that such men are crippled not because any one organ has been impaired but because one or the other has been overmagnified. Karl Mannheim made essentially the same observation: "Individuals...may, under certain circumstances, suffer from the danger of disintegration because their capacities fail to develop equally and harmoniously."[372] Increasingly, says Mumford, the human community has turned into a society in which no one person is sufficiently developed as a man to be able to discern what the other person, "equally underdeveloped as a man, was thinking and feeling and premeditating.... Only men who are themselves whole can understand the needs and desires and ideals of other

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[371] Ibid., p. 185.

[372] Karl Mannheim, Quoted in The Condition of Man by Lewis Mumford, p. 417.

men."[373]

The assumption that specialism is "here to stay," in Mumford's view, must be combatted by demonstrating that specialism is ultimately hostile to life. He contends that a growing body of knowledge investigating the needs of organisms, societies, and personalities is demonstrating that it is only by overcoming the tendency to specialization that a person and a community combat the rigidity which leads to inefficiency and a general failure to meet life's demands. Time after time he refers to the ant:

> Let our over-specialized sluggards consider the ant: in sixty years formic society has undergone no change and the experience of the ants has led to no further development, precisely because of the miracle of adoptive specialization that brought perfection and stability at the ant's level and closed every route to change and betterment.[374]

Man, today, is in danger of the same result.

In place of this specialism, what is needed is the balanced personality, one equally at home in all aspects of his internal and external environment. For if one is not to give too much attention to any one aspect of life, he needs to be open to all aspects. Dynamic interaction with every part of one's heritage, Mumford continues, is of the utmost importance. Man needs to be receptive to and be able to treat all experience--economic, esthetic, parental, vocational, political, etc.--as the interrelated experiences of one single whole which is life itself. Since such balance is so difficult to achieve, the entire personality must be involved at all times. No one aspect of one's life can be separated from any other, but each needs to influence and be influenced by the others. Thus, an essential characteristic of the mature man is the ability to

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[373]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 186.

[374]Ibid.

alternate continuously between "the objective and the subjective aspects, between the sciences and the ideologies, between active participation and contemplative withdrawal."[375]

Since on this point Mumford's stance is so dependent on the Aristotelian Doctrine of the Mean, it will be helpful to state briefly Aristotle's position as outlined in the Ethics. It is a characteristic of all good actions, Aristotle contends, that they illustrate a certain order of proportion. Therefore, the virtuous man is one who moves between two extremes: the vice of excess and the vice of defect. This holds true both in regard to a feeling one has or an action he pursues. One could take for an example the feeling of confidence. An excess of this feeling given expression in action constitutes rashness while a defect is cowardice. The mean is a course between both extremes, in this instance courage. Virtue, then, is a "disposition to choose, consisting essentially in a mean relatively determined to us by a rule, i.e. the rule by which a practically wise man would determine it."[376] Mumford builds on this insight but also emphasizes, as did Aristotle, that since particular circumstances demand particular responses, each judgment must be made situationally. Time, place, circumstance, and organic capacity must always be taken into account. Further, the doctrine "must be limited by its own canon."[377] There are occasions when in the interest of an eventual equilibrium one must abandon the mean in order to intensify activity in one area. Mumford lists as examples military combat and creative

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[375]Mumford, Values for Survival, p. 212.

[376]Aristotle, Quoted in A History of Philosophy, Vol. 1, Part 2, by Frederick Copleston (Garden City, New York: Image Books, 1962), p. 78.

[377]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 146.

work in the arts and sciences.

Since, however, balance is not an end in itself, but instead the means by which self-transcendence may be achieved, balance may be thought of in qualitative as well as quantitative terms. There are some aspects of the personality which take precedence over others. Mumford states that in the same way there is a heirarchy of functions within the body, so also is this true regarding ethical conduct. But although ethical conduct implies a heirarchy of functions, it does not imply a separation. No life function is to be ignored (the mistake of many earlier ethical systems), but each is assigned a place on the basis of selected criteria. Since the human organism is a unity, it functions properly only when all its organs are operating in harmony with one another.

> The essence of wisdom, then, is to pay sufficient attention to the lower functions to insure their fullest contribution to the whole process of growth; but not to allow them to usurp the place of the higher functions or to disrupt the whole.[378]

What are the lower functions? Those that are automatic and habitual. The higher, on the other hand, are those which are selective and spontaneous. Each needs the other! The higher needs the lower to supply the energy for propulsions, whereas it is by way of the higher that the lower finds outlets for ends they cannot encompass and for choices they cannot make.

At the heart of self-development is freedom. When the person is acting in accord with his ideal goal, Mumford contends, he is moving in the direction of increasing freedom--that is, the ability to exercise constant choice and discrimination. Growth is an increasing liberation from automatism and a movement toward self-direction and self-control.

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[378] Ibid., p. 142.

Anything which stands in the way of increasing this freedom, whether this be parental despotism, poverty, or ignorance, inhibits growth. Thus, for growth to occur, as many impediments as possible, both external and internal, must be removed. Further, true education may be described as a slow induction into the possibilities of freedom:

> ...a transfer of restraint from the outer world to the inner man, and a progressive increase of choice, as intelligence and experience and imagination widen the range of his vision and increase the number of alternatives before him.[379]

Freedom, however, does not mean the casting off of restraints, the destruction of inhibitions, nor the denial of responsibilities. Instead, one may say that it is the developing ability on the part of a maturing person to select restraints based on wide choice and to assume the responsibilities which manhood implies.

Intelligence and love, Mumford continues, are of utmost importance to man in his movement toward freedom. For despite many obstacles, mind has matured. Since man began his career there has been an increase in both its quantity and its quality. The blind forces which stirred through matter and organic life have achieved a consciousness which "reaches ever further back into origins and ever further forward into possible choices and possible destinies."[380] Increasing insight into man's inner and outer world is presenting him with data on which a more mature concept of human development can be based. Disciplined thought describing organic and human development is replacing guess and myth with accurate observation and more comprehensive insight. It is man's responsibility in a critical age to use this inheritance wisely.

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[379] Ibid., p. 143.

[380] Mumford, The Transformations of Man, p. 181.

But even more important than intelligence is love. In fact, says Mumford, "to make ourselves capable of loving, and ready to receive love, is the paramount problem of integration: indeed, the key to salvation."[381] Unfortunately, he says, we have not yet learned to do this and continues by saying that it is only by "a score of daily acts" that love can be advanced. He defines love as a capacity for embracing otherness, for widening the circle of interests in which the self may operate, for begetting new forms of life. This definition, of course, allows for many expressions:

> ...love as erotic desire and procreativeness, love as passion and aesthetic delight,...love as fellow feeling and neighborly helpfulness, bestowing its gifts on those who need them, love as parental solicitude and sacrifice, finally, love with its miraculous capacity for over-valuing its own object, thereby glorifying it and transfiguring it, releasing for life something that only the lover at first can see.[382]

Each of these expressions in its own way frees the person for continuing self-transcendence.

Since the ultimate purpose of love is that of embracing otherness in all its forms, it includes not only other human beings but other creatures and organic structures as well. Love remains partial until this occurs. In Thoreau-like fashion Mumford states:

> ...the spread of megolopolitan deserts undercuts love at its very base because it removes man's sense of active partnership and fellowship in the common processes of growth, which bind him to other organisms.[383]

Thus, love will be fulfilled when man has reunited himself not only with other men but with all other forms of organic and inorganic life. Until

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[381] Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 285.

[382] Mumford, The Transformations of Man, p. 184.

[383] Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 286.

this broadening of the concept of love is understood, says Mumford, man will continue to exploit his environment rather than cooperate with it and, in the process, degrade and ultimately destroy himself.

Mumford states that already in isolated instances in our society there are individuals who prefigure in their lives and actions the collective transformation which will need to take place if there is to be renewal rather than suicide. Out of a number of possible individuals, he chooses Albert Schweitzer and Patrick Geddes as classic examples of renewal and integration. He states that in his discussion of Schweitzer he intends to concentrate on Schweitzer's life rather than his writings because he feels that although Schweitzer's conscious philosophy is sometimes inadequate and contradictory, his life transcends the limitations of his thought. That is to say, Mumford sees in Schweitzer's actions a fuller philosophy than that which has consciously guided him.

Mumford views Schweitzer's scholarly critique of the life of Jesus as being very significant in Schweitzer's personal life because this critique brought Schweitzer to the conviction that a true follower of Jesus must, in the Twentieth Century, take up the cross and perform some redemptive work of sacrifice. To do such would not bring fame but more probably neglect, ill-health, and possibly death. Yet Schweitzer did not shrink from self-sacrifice, but chose it willingly.

> With a vigilant eye, Schweitzer picked a classic example: the degradation of primitive peoples through imperialist exploitation, often coming on top of a primitive life that in itself, by reason of its own ignorance, superstition, and brutality did violence to the human spirit.[384]

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[384] Ibid., p. 208.

Mumford lists a number of reasons why he views Schweitzer as one whose example needs to be followed if renewal is to occur. First, he says, "Schweitzer committed the typical act of sacrifice for the coming age: he deliberately reduced the intensive cultivation of any one field, in order to expand the contents and the significance of his life as a whole."[385] Mumford is referring, of course, to Schweitzer's eminence in so many fields--theology, medicine, music. He continues by saying that although the humility which made it possible to make such a sacrifice derived from Schweitzer's religious convictions, the result of this sacrifice was not, as is often the case, negation of life but instead life's fullest realization.

A second important aspect of Schweitzer's life and work is the fact that his field of action was less in his own original fatherland, among the people who spoke his preferred language, than in the country of its rival and later its active enemy, France. Mumford states that without such devaluation and renunciation of nationalism a man remains "only half a man: the universal part of his personality, equally essential to his becoming human, is still unborn."[386] It is against this limitation of humanity that Schweitzer's universalism speaks.

A third aspect is that of perspective. The relative detachment from civilization which was to be Schweitzer's lot during his early years of relative obscurity as a medical missionary gave him a perspective on Western life which determined the further direction of his thinking. Mumford feels that such detachment is important if one is to gain a more inclusive view of man and his destiny than any closer involvement in im-

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[385] Ibid., p. 209.

[386] Ibid., pp. 209-210.

mediate issues can give. As a result of Schweitzer's detachment, his analysis of Western civilization has proved to be of great value for Western man's self-understanding.

In conclusion, Mumford states that no one knows better than Schweitzer that a life of balance cannot be achieved without sacrifice. "Yet that balance itself counterweighs and nullifies the sacrifice by intensifying and expanding the possibilities of life."

> Schweitzer's moral greatness derives from the fact that he has shown it is possible, without denouncing the methods and insights of modern science, to achieve that which no science, no philosophy, no religion as yet adequately teaches: the possibility of becoming a whole man and of living, even under hostile circumstances, a whole life.[387]

His life is a sign and a pledge, states Mumford, that even today it is possible to live a life organic in structure, personal in expression; no longer the victim of specialism, nihilism, and automatism. Schweitzer demonstrates in his person the fact that it is indeed possible to redirect the forces of our civilization and to create a new working unity between our powers and our purposes which will utilize every suppressed or mutilated human potentiality.

> External events beyond our human powers of control may for a time make this growth abortive: that has happened before and it may happen again. But if Western Civilization escapes the evil fate that its over-commitment to mechanism and automatism, its wholesale denial of human values and purposes, now threatens it with, if it overcomes its delusions of atomic grandeur and its psychotic compulsions to suicide or genocide, then the form that life will take, and the type of personality that will nurture it, is the form and the type that Albert Schweitzer has embodied. On such a basis, the renewal of life is possible.[388]

The second individual whom Mumford, continuously throughout his authorship, projects as an example of the balanced life is the obscure Scot biologist and city planner, Patrick Geddes. Indeed, Mumford regards

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[387] Ibid., p. 214. [388] Ibid., p. 215.

Geddes as his "earliest master."[389] Geddes' influence on Mumford began in 1915 and has continued in varying degrees since that time. In Geddes, Mumford sees one whose life

> ...had more than its animal destiny of reproduction and physical survival. It had a high destiny, that of revamping out of nature's original materials, with the help of nature's original patterns, a more perfectly harmonized, a more finely attuned, a more completely balanced expression of both personality and community.[390]

Thus, in Geddes, Mumford sees a manifestation of what he considers life to be at its best--a unification of all life processes to the end that growth might ensue. Geddes knew the value of the sciences, the arts, the humanities, the function of the cloister and the cathedral. But he approached all these in an organic manner--that is, he saw each of them in relation to the other, each complementing and correcting the other. In his personality, Mumford says, a new mutation took place; and by his example, the path of renewal becomes clearer.

This estimate is repeated in book after book, in The Transformations of Man, in The Conduct of Life, and in numerous shorter statements. However, in an essay written in the Nineteen Sixties in Encounter magazine entitled "The Disciple's Rebellion," one is given a different understanding of Mumford's relation to Geddes. Mumford still acknowledges his affinity to Geddes but it becomes clear that the influence has not been as profound as Mumford has led his readers and probably himself to believe previous to the publishing of the essay. Further, Mumford points up weaknesses in Geddes' character which he had totally ignored up to that time, at least in his published writing. Still, he does say in the es-

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[389] Mumford, The Story of Utopias, preface to 1962 edition.

[390] Mumford, The Condition of Man, p. 385.

say:

> I still do not regret that I used Geddes in person as the final symbol of renewal in The Condition of Man. Only in Albert Schweitzer did I find a comparable fulfillment of the transformation that this book affirmed and demanded.[391]

He ends the article by stating that Geddes' influence has been greater in "personal indebtedness" than most people have assumed and lesser in "intellectual adhesion." This seems to be an accurate evaluation. Ultimately, it was the vision of what a life could be like--which Geddes prompted in the young mind of Mumford--rather than the profundity of thought which drew Mumford to Geddes. Even though later this purity of ideal example was marred, the gratitude for an original stimulus remained.

One might agree with Mumford's vision of what life should be like, but the question remains: How does one incarnate in himself and in others these qualities Mumford has been advancing? What is needed, he says, is a new kind of education, one which will constitute the chief business of life. The external opportunity for this shift has come about only within the past few years. No longer does life need to be dominated by work since the machine is increasingly relieving man of this burden. Thus, if man takes advantage of the new possibilities opened up by the cybernetic revolution and reorients his economic institutions around an economy of need rather than one of increasing wants, his gains will be those of leisure. The outcome of the cybernated era need not be a plethora of goods and gadgets. Instead, it can be an unprecedented opportunity for leisure.

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[391]Lewis Mumford, "The Disciple's Rebellion," Encounter, (September, 1966), p. 15.

> In fact, without leisure, our expansion in industrial production would be almost meaningless; for we need a plenitude of time if we are to select and assimilate all the genuine goods that man now commands. Schola means leisure; and leisure makes possible the school. The promise of a life economy is to provide schooling for the fullest kind of human growth--not for the further expansion of the machine.[392]

The kind of development needed, he continues, is so different from previous educational endeavors that one must bestow upon it a new name. The words education, self-development, character formation, conversion are all related, but each of them reflect limitations. "Education" is too exclusively related to so-called "bookish training"; "self-development" too sharply separates the welfare of the individual from his social context; "character formation" recalls too quickly a flavour of narrowness and negation historically related to Puritanism; and "conversion," at least in its formative stages, indicates only a change of attitude and direction, and, like self-development, does not provide the social context. Mumford does say, however, that the term "conversion" embodies much which has to be incorporated into a broader educational process.

The term Mumford likes is the Greek term "paideia" which Werner Jaeger popularized in his study of Greek education. It is important to quote Mumford's succinct definition of this term:

> Paideia is education looked upon as a life-long transformation of the human personality, in which every aspect of life plays a part. Unlike education in the traditional sense, paideia does not limit itself to the conscious learning processes, or to inducting the young into the social heritage of the community. Paideia is rather the task of giving form to the act of living itself: treating every occasion of life as a means of self-fabrication, and as part of a larger process of converting facts into values, processes into purposes, hopes and plans into consummations and realizations. Paideia is not merely a learning: it is a making and a shaping; and man himself is the work of art that paideia seeks to form.[393]

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[392] Mumford, The Transformations of Man, p. 186.

[393] Ibid., p. 187.

The unity which paideia seeks must be sought in concrete experience. It demands an ability to interchange roles even at the sacrifice of expertness "for the sake of the greater gain to learning and life." The achievement of this wholeness must take precedence over every specialized activity and every narrower purpose. Though the new man will still develop specialized skills, he will tend to be multi-occupational as a citizen in harmony with a broader understanding of life. Exercising all the capacities of a man will take precedence over the identifying badge of a vocation or an office. Mumford quotes Hegel's dictum concerning an educated man: "One who can do what any other man can do."[394]

If man seizes this opportunity, rather than the emergence of Post-historic Man, One World Man will emerge. This man will "begin to shape his whole existence in the forms of love as he once shaped the shadowy figments of his imagination....

> In carrying man's self-transformation to this further stage, world culture may bring about a fresh release of energy that will unveil new potentialities, no more visible in the human self today than radium was in the physical world a century ago, though always present. Even on its lowest terms, world culture will weld the nations and tribes together in a more meaningful network of relations and purposes. But unified man himself is no terminal point. For who can set bounds to man's emergence or to his power of surpassing his provisional achievements? So far we have found no limits to the imagination, nor yet to the sources on which it may draw. Every goal man reaches provides a new starting point, and the sum of all man's days is just a beginning.[395]

Perhaps the most important contribution which Mumford has made to Twentieth Century thought is expressed in the conviction that the starting point for all inquiry into the nature of reality must be the human personality. In an age dominated by externality, he stands as one of the

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[394] Ibid., p. 188.

[395] Ibid., p. 192.

few prophets of our time who continue to assert that man's exploration of himself should form the basis of his exploration of the external world, and not vice versa. If, increasingly, this could become an operating principle for individuals and groups, many of the compulsive activities which characterize contemporary society might be replaced by those reflecting a saner and more inclusive understanding of the nature of human life. However, so long as men continue to neglect the basic human question, "What does it mean to be a man?", the compulsions will either continue indefinitely or lead men to a disaster from which there will be no return.

Men neglect this question probably for any number of reasons: It might be we fear to raise it because it opens a dimension of life which threatens our orderly existence; it might be that we have become so enamoured with the present shallowness of our lives that we have lost touch with the depths; or it might be that in our busyness, we simply do not find the time. Whatever the reason, the present critical situation in which we find ourselves, both individually and as a society, demands that we confront the question quickly and seriously. Further, the crisis need not be simply threat. Instead, it can prove to be an opportunity for a new mutation in the historical process whereby man not only regains what he has lost through centuries of neglect but brings forth radically new possibilities not yet imagined.

Loren Eiseley in The Firmament of Time tells a story about one of the great atomic physicists of our time.

> This man, one of the chief architects of the atomic bomb, was out wandering in the woods one day with a friend when he came upon a small turtle. Overcome with pleasurable excitement, he took up the turtle and started home, thinking to surprise his children with it. After a few steps, he paused and surveyed the animal doubtfully.
>
> "What's the matter?" asked his friend.
>
> Without responding, the great scientist slowly retraced his steps as precisely as possible, and gently set the turtle down upon the exact spot from which he had taken him up. Then he turned solemnly to

his friend.

"It just struck me," he said, "that perhaps, for one man, I have tampered enough with the universe."

He turned and left the turtle to wander on its way.

Eisely analysed the man's reaction in the following way:

> It was not a denial of science. It was final recognition that science is not enough for man. It is not the road back to the waiting garden, for that road lies through the heart of man. Only when man has recognized this fact will science become what it was for Bacon, something to speak of as "touching upon hope." Only then will man be truly human.[396]

This is precisely what Mumford is saying. Man will not find the answer to the riddle of his existence as a derivative of scientific exploration. Instead, such exploration will only provide some of the tools to help unlock the riddle when filtered through the broader life of man. The scientist in the above-mentioned story recognized this truth, at least vaguely. He allowed the turtle to go its way, not because he had given up on the scientific method, but because he was aware that the pleasure of scientific discovery is not a sufficient motive for manipulation of one's environment. He knew that unless his scientific knowledge was integrated into a fuller understanding of human life, his knowledge would be ultimately destructive rather than creative. By beginning his inquiry into the nature of reality with the human personality in all its dimensions rather than the external world, his relationship to that world was immediately altered.

One thinks of the current disarray of personal and social priorities, a classic example of which is the high place given on the scale to space exploration. A normative answer of those who argue that space exploration must be pursued at the highest possible rate of speed is that, since man is dominated by a sense of inquiry, his nature demands that he

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[396]Loren Eiseley, The Firmament of Time, Quoted in Kaiser Aluminum News, No. 6, 1966, p. 26.

must explore outer space simply "because it is there." One does not wish to deny this sense of inquiry. It probably is a manifestation of the drive in man to continuing self-transcendence. The object of the inquiry, however, is open to question. A fuller understanding of the nature of human life would quicken man's imagination in innumerable ways--toward deeper penetration of his psychic life, exploration of the dynamics of interpersonal relations, experimentation on a broad scale into the nature of cities, commitment to the possibilities which the arts present--all of which also represent manifestations of the drive to self-transcendence. But these areas continue to be underplayed because man is still allowing the physical universe to draw up the agenda for human life. He continues to pursue a life style which he assumes is normative for human life but which we have seen is really the product of a development only a few centuries in the making. If, on the other hand, the human personality were to become the starting point of inquiry, man's exploration of the physical world, while not ceasing, would be balanced by other explorations as well. Further, the nature of the exploration would also change.

The notion of balance, central to Mumford's understanding of the meaning of human life, is one easily misunderstood by the reader. When Mumford speaks of the need for balance in the life of a person and a society, he does so because by way of it, he contends, man continues on the path toward his ultimate goal--continuing self-transcendence in freedom. Balance is a means to an ideal end. It itself is not the ideal. Mumford has concluded by empirical observation of outstanding men and societies, as well as that of other organisms, that balance provides the basis for continuing evolution whereas specialism does not. It is on

this basis that he gives it a central place in his program.

Even when clarified in this way, however, the proposal does cause problems; because if one looks at it from an individual standpoint, he comes out differently than if he were to view it from a broader social standpoint. That is to say, at a point in the historical process when an imbalance of social concerns is rife, and in which certain aspects of life are overemphasized at the expense of others, following Mumford's guidelines implies a strong reaction in the other direction. But if this is to occur, one would think that particular individuals and groups would have to sacrifice balance in their own lives for the sake of broader social balance. A man has only a limited number of days to live and develop and act. Therefore, if he lives in a period of particular social crisis and feels a peculiar responsibility to assist in the amelioration process, his involvement necessarily implies underdevelopment of other potentialities. One can mention in this light men and women of our own day who have given themselves to assisting the dispossessed of our society and who spend endless days and nights on behalf of that commitment. Surely Mumford would not fault these.

Yet, his statement regarding Albert Schweitzer as a model for our time does cause confusion. In a statement quoted earlier, he says of Schweitzer:

> Schweitzer committed the typical act of sacrifice for the coming age: he deliberately reduced the **intensive** cultivation of any one field, in order to expand the contents and the significance of his life as a whole.[397]

In a personal context, such a program makes eminently good sense; but given the state of contemporary society, such personal balance may not be

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[397]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 209.

desirable. It appears that Mumford has not adequately related the concepts of personal and social balance. For it is conceivable that following his prescription one could achieve admirable personal balance in his life in such a way that his responsibility to the society in which he lives has been minimized. In Schweitzer's case, of course, this was not true, but then Schweitzer was not an ordinary mortal!

The Christian Church faces this dilemma today. Historically, it has tried to live what one might call a balanced life in the sense that it has attempted with varying degrees of success to provide sustenance for men at all levels of their lives. It has presided over the baptismal ceremony, confirmation, marriage, vocation, burial. In a period when the Christian faith was seen by many as the great integrating force in society, this all-inclusive character was seldom questioned. Now, however, in an age of increasing pluralism, when Christianity is not seen necessarily as the integrator of all vision but perhaps as contributing to a broader synthesis beyond itself, what does this mean to the so-called balanced life of the church? Should the church abandon its attempt to speak to all of man's needs and concentrate on those which seem either particularly pressing at a given moment in history or those seen as the peculiar responsibility of the church? The latter is probably the better course to follow. There are dangers inherent in this choice, the primary one being that of becoming captive to the moment, examples of which have been cited in previous chapters. Also there are critical choices to be made: What are the areas of pressing need for which the church has a particular capacity to be of service? How might it best serve? But if one opts for the emerging pluralism, as I do, these questions must be faced and answered.

This means, however, that balance in the life of the church is

being sacrificed in the hope that through its emphasis on areas of critical need now neglected, a broader balance on the part of the larger society might be achieved. The church, of course, is not the only institution which faces this choice. All institutions do, if they are concerned with the good of their society. Mumford's concept of balance would be more helpful if he faced this dilemma more sharply.

Perhaps a more adequate answer to this problem would be not to urge that one deliberately reduce the intensive cultivation of any one field but instead demand that specialists in all fields be required to face each other in direct confrontation. In this way, presuppositions would constantly be challenged. In academia a feeble attempt has been made in this direction through the establishment of interdisciplinary courses. For the most part these have proved ineffective because they have been merely added to a curriculum which remains basically discipline-oriented. If, on the other hand, the curriculum was changed to one which was problem-oriented, chances for success would be much more likely. Centering on a problem imposes a common ground which provides the basis for communication and the sharing of insights. The same reasoning prevails on a broader social basis. If a society can agree on priorities which constitute a balanced social life, itself a big "if," it is not necessary that all members of that society incarnate that balance individually. But it is necessary that structures be provided so that each can contribute to the broader social balance. At the same time, such structures would challenge the narrow specialisms which continue to entice men and which Mumford rightly condemns.

Mumford's understanding of the purpose of human life--that of

growth in freedom and self-transcendence--finds many echoes in the Christian tradition. Jesus' attitude toward external authority is typical. One might mention in this regard his attitude toward Jewish law. His open conflict with the pharisees and scribes, the custodians of this law, is well-known and requires little elaboration. But Jesus' attitude toward the law is instructive. He did not disregard it nor did he intend to abolish it. He recognized its continuing importance in the life of men. But he knew also that the law was made for men and not men for the law. Thus, when it stood in the way of higher motivations it needed revision and fulfillment. The same was true regarding other areas of life. Whether it be one's family, his possessions, the religious tradition--whatever stood in the way of life-fulfillment was to be abandoned. But to do this implied growth in responsible freedom, a freedom granted to man by God. In place of a life dictated by external authorities and conditions, Jesus promised a life dictated by internal direction in response to God's initiative.

Martin Luther's classic work, A Treatise on Christian Liberty, also illustrates this theme. In this treatise Luther makes the point that nothing external can destroy the liberty a Christian enjoys. This is the result of the creation of the "inward man" by way of Jesus Christ. Christ has freed the Christian to live in faith. Though continuing to be necessary for social order, no longer is external law normative. Instead, that law which God writes "in our hearts" is our ultimate guide. Finally, in our own day one could point to Nicolai Berdyaev as a primary advocate of the theme of freedom.

This is not to say that Mumford's understanding of growth in freedom which is man's goal is a concept identical to that espoused in the

Christian tradition. A major difference which is immediately apparent, and one which will be addressed shortly, is the source of this freedom. But there is a clear similarity in that both imply the growth from a personality primarily outer-directed in character to that of inner-direction. Both Mumford and Jesus see man's maturity as a continuing transfer of restraint from the outer man to the inner man and in a widening of the possibilities of freedom.

This theme takes on special significance today as the dispossessed--the poor, minority groups, young people--no longer willing to live within the bounds dictated by others, clamor for a place of significance in society. For despite inevitable distortions on the part of some, the intent is valid. It is the attempt to mold one's life in accordance with one's inner motivations rather than allowing oneself to be manipulated by external forces. This is basic to the nature of human life; and until policy makers at all levels of the society grasp this insight and structure social mechanisms to take account of it, conflict will inevitably increase. Unless one is given the opportunity to share with power in decisions of great moment to him, decisions made for him will be rejected because they violate the purpose of his creation--growth in freedom and self-direction.

This drive toward freedom is illustrated sharply in the gulf which is increasingly widening between the so-called Old Left and New Left. The Old Left tends to regard freedom as lack of restraint. In this understanding, men protect each other's freedom by manifesting tolerance for one another as they pursue varying goals or combine in cooperative endeavors. But as Michael Novak has perceived, for the New Left this model is inadequate. It...

...is too mechanistic, too impersonal, too inhuman; in their eyes,

> it is ripe for manipulation. Someone, somewhere rationalizes the system of particles and directs their flow, reducing tensions "creatively" by adroit adjustments. Freedom in such a system is only the appearance of freedom, such as academic people commonly seem to manifest.[398]

The New Left, on the other hand, perceives freedom not as lack of restraint but in the sense that Mumford views it: as change in the locus of restraint, as growth in self-direction. Freedom is not granted one by the system in which one lives nor by the tolerance of one's associates. It is seized from within and is viewed as the progressive development of one's own values, judgments, perceptions, insights, and the ability to act decisively on the basis of these values. The freedom advocated by the New Left does not contradict that of the Old Left so much as it supplements it, in that the latter is not rooted deeply enough in the inner growth and development of the human person.

The freedom which the New Left advocates cannot be legislated but neither can it be denied by a prison cell. It grows so long as one finds within himself resources of strength, and it dies when these resources are lost, no matter what the outward state of the society.

The New Left has problems of its own. It lacks the concrete programs for political action needed in a complex world. It has a dangerous tendency to self-righteousness, and it tends to restrict the base of human experience. But its concept of freedom is one desperately needed at the present time and one at the heart of other expressions of freedom current in this country and abroad. At its best, the New Left represents the call to internality advocated in chapters one and two of this thesis. As it views both the lack of success and the corruption of the same in

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[398]Michael Novak, "The Secular Saint," The Center Magazine, Vol. I, (May, 1968), p. 54.

the programmatic approach of the Old Left, increasingly its orientation is internal rather than external. To the New Left, men have ceased being men; they have sold themselves out to the system. If change is to come, it will come as a small, disciplined group of individuals free themselves from the restraints a corrupt society has foisted on them, renew themselves, and then redesign institutions and build new ones which manifest this renewal. Freedom proceeds from the inner man. A society will not be free until it has within it free men.

However, when one addresses the issue of freedom, he is immediately driven to ask the question of its source, and it is here that Mumford's positive program of renewal is most vulnerable. For his call to freedom lacks the same realism as his call to recognition and repentance of sin. The reader will remember that Mumford cites intelligence and love as the two traits central to man's movement into freedom. Intelligence's importance lies in the fact that it opens to man ever-widening possibilities for understanding himself and his world. It is indispensable for further development. Love's importance roots in the fact that it is the channel through which one embraces otherness in all its forms. Without this latter the work of intelligence will turn destructive rather than creative. But how is this love to be accomplished? Mumford contends that the answer lies in a more intensive effort on man's part than at any time in the past. If man is to be free--indeed, if the world is not to be destroyed--man must make himself "capable of loving, and ready to receive love." The burden of man's renewal rests on himself. Men are constantly tempted to fall away from love of others into self-centeredness. Therefore, only those strong enough to admit this constant tendency will be capable of finding new paths:

> ...only those who confess their sins will be re-activated sufficiently to attempt the transformation that must now take place in every institution, in every group, in every person.[399]

The source of Mumford's increasing pessimism is the fact that with few exceptions, men are not readying themselves to receive love, they are not confessing their sins, but instead are increasingly transforming themselves into latter-day barbarians. Exhortations by Mumford and numerous others apparently have been to no avail.

Actually, Mumford should not be surprised at this. One has no reason to believe that a man will suddenly reverse his direction simply because he is told he must. Very few, for example, need to be told of the importance of love between individuals and societies. Indeed, platitudes come easily in this area. Further, many are already painfully aware of the desperate need for human renewal. Our problem, both as individuals and societies, lies in the fact that we seem unable to accomplish that which we know we ought to do; and we find ourselves doing that which we ought not to do. It is one thing to visualize the mature man and the mature society but quite another to manifest it.

It is to Mumford's credit that he does not merely exhort the reader, as some have done. He is well aware of the counter-productivity resulting from frustration when one is told to do something and given no tools by which to do it. We have already discussed his concept of education in which he seeks concreteness. The last chapter of The Conduct of Life entitled "The Way and the Life" is further testimony to this same awareness. In this chapter he lays out and develops specific suggestions for the conduct of one's life. Under the rubric "Preparation for Life," he includes the following: (1) a profound analysis of the self at all

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[399]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 173.

levels; (2) a nourishing of the inner life to the end that new possibilities might be imagined; (3) a deliberate escape "from this time cage: deliberately to thin out one's activities and slow down one's responses, letting events sink in, mulling them over, lingering over their significance, before advancing to the next task";[400] (4) a concern for conscious, periodic withdrawal and spiritual concentration to the end that one lives two lives, both of which are necessary: the actual world and that which is in our minds. Though...

> ...we cannot give the same amount of time to the second as to the first, we can use the economy of symbols and images...to encompass as much life in a few minutes, if we secure the free time in the first place, as we could by actual hours of living.[401]

(5) a conscious attempt to strip life down to its essentials for the sake of greater spontaneity and freedom; (6) a conscious broadening of the sphere of human association at all levels (the discipline of personal independence, the discipline of public service, the rebuilding of the family); (7) the integration of life through a broadening of love's domain; (8) the acceptance of responsibility for past failures and the assumption of responsibility for the future. There is no need to develop these points further since they have already been addressed elsewhere in the thesis. As we have seen, Mumford has attempted to incarnate them in his own life. They are admirable in intent. The problem with them is that they presuppose an ability to appropriate them on the part of those to whom they are directed, a presupposition not verified by experience.

Whereas Mumford seems to view his guidelines as the means by which freedom is achieved, they seem more adequate as guides for the already free man. But to him who does not know this freedom, they probably serve

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[400] Ibid., p. 257.

[401] Ibid., p. 265.

more to frustrate and deepen a sense of guilt than to release. Mumford appears unable to understand this. It is one thing to know what one must do but quite another to have the inner resources necessary to live and act accordingly. Paul Tillich once said correctly:

> Man, seeing what he ought to be, driven by the anxiety of losing himself, believing in his strength to actualize his essential being, disregarding the bondage of the will, tries to regain again what he has lost. But this situation of estrangement, in which the law becomes commandment, is just the situation in which the law cannot be fulfilled.[402]

It may be that there are isolated individuals who can will themselves into the kind of life which Mumford proposes. The majority of us, however, seem incapable of such Herculean effort. Therefore, one finishes The Conduct of Life with profound frustration because he affirms Mumford's analysis of our present critical state, agrees basically with the alternatives offered, yet feels that Mumford has led him to the promised land but denied him entrance.

The sense of frustration is heightened because there is within Mumford's own mature thinking the seeds of a more adequate position. As we have seen in our discussion of the role of religion in his thought, he is struggling with a concept of the Divine which, though not totally clarified, seems to imply that there is that in the universe which goes out to man in such a way that his life is enriched. Man's relationship to this larger reality, he contends, gives him a better grasp of cosmic processes than if he had cut himself off from it. Indeed, one of man's major shortcomings in recent years is that increasingly he is denying this aspect of his being and diminishing himself accordingly. Nothing, Mumford states, is more unaccountable to man "than the stirrings he finds in himself,

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[402]Paul Tillich, Systematic Theology, Vol II (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1957), p. 81.

usually fitful, but sometimes overwhelming to look beyond his animal existence and not be fully satisfied with life's immediate substance."[403] Could it be that these stirrings are the activity of the Divine seeking entrance into man's estate not only to broaden his vision of life's meaning but also to give him the strength to live out this meaning? Unfortunately, Mumford does not face this issue when he develops his positive program so that one finds it difficult to integrate his discussion of the Divine into his broader program.

Ordway Tead, in a review of The Condition of Man for The Saturday Review of Literature, expressed frustration similar to that which I have expressed in the preceding paragraph. Toward the end of an extremely positive review, Mr. Tead states that despite Mumford's turn toward religion in his later years, "the acknowledgment of religion as critical and powerful seems somehow timid and restrained...." He continues:

> Always noble in spirit and generous in sentiment, Mumford somehow articulated less than one feels the need for in his religious affirmation. In this he is no doubt a child of his age for which the symbolic not to say the intellectual formulation of new religious symbols is still ahead.[404]

Mr. Tead's insight may be accurate. Mumford may well be a child of his age on this issue in that he is still reacting so strongly against the sterility of much religious formulation that the time for a more thorough integration of the role of religion into his positive program has not yet arrived. This may prove to be the task of one of his disciples.

Toward the end of The Conduct of Life, in the midst of developing his positive program, one finds a fascinating paragraph which again one

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[403] Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 68.

[404] Ordway Tead, Review of The Condition of Man, by Lewis Mumford, The Saturday Review of Literature (May 20, 1944), p. 8.

wishes Mumford would have developed more adequately. He speaks of his habit of setting aside a half hour a day, in solitude, free from the possibility of interruption, "void of any conscious reflection on directed thought."[405] He continues by expressing his conviction that such activity is essential for the recovery of "spontaneity and autonomy, for the opening up of depths of one's mind that are otherwise closed by any sort of activity--even of a mental order."[406] He concludes by stating that even though one can rarely hope to awaken the Divine, one can at least hope that, through the kind of reflection described above, hidden potentialities may become visible. If one had not read his earlier discussion of the Divine, he would be inclined to regard this latter statement as literary license. However, on the basis of the earlier discussion one can read it as implying that there are resources in the cosmos beyond man's control which provide potential for new and fuller life. To be sure, man can provide the occasions for entrance of the Divine into human life (meditation in silence, for example), but the Divine manifests itself whenever and wherever it will. It will not be manipulated. Again, however, Mumford fails to develop this insight and returns to exhortation to man to act without regard to it.

It may be that Mumford's failure to build on his concept of the Divine suffers from what one might call his overly-intellectualized understanding of the concept. This becomes evident when one reads "Cosmos and Person" in The Conduct of Life. In this he tends to restrict the activity of the Divine to that of broadening man's mental perceptions of the nature of the unfolding universe. The Divine is that which holds the

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[405] Ibid., p. 257. [406] Ibid.

key to new mutations in the cosmic process. Mumford fails to see the significance of the Divine as an agent of moral transformation. One looks in vain for statements which relate the Divine to man's need to embrace otherness in all its forms, to love and to receive love. It is as if Mumford is able to visualize an encroachment of the Divine into human life to the end that men might perceive pervasive universal purpose but is unable to give to it a quality personal enough to assist men in those humanizing qualities which make life worthwhile. This, he says, is the responsibility of men, and he suffers because he sees men failing miserably. At this point he reverts to the "pure" humanism characteristic of his earlier writing.

The Christian faith has a more profound interpretation of the human condition in this instance than does Mumford. For at the heart of its message is a more sharply defined understanding of the character of man's existence before the Divine. The Divine, it asserts, does provide man with clues as to the nature of the cosmic process. It reveals itself in acts of self-revelation. By way of this revelation the Christian faith affirms, as does Mumford, that man does not exist in an alien universe. But beyond Mumford, it claims that the Divine is actively at work in the universe seeking man's renewal. That which the Christian calls God sustains man in his endeavors and seeks to provide him with the resources necessary for a purposeful life.

The Christian man places his trust in a God who does not await man's initiative but actively seeks men out, gives of Himself to men. He is present to men because it is His desire that men be made whole and that broken lives be renewed. It is this personal quality about God which is implicit in the Christian faith and absent in Mumford's thought.

The Christian trusts the person of God to act on his behalf and lives his life out of this trust. Richard Niebuhr states:

> This principle of personlike integrity is fundamental in a revelation that is an event which elicits the confidence of selves in their ultimate environment and calls upon them as free selves to decide for the universal cause.[407]

When Martin Luther King, Jr. was murdered, Robert Kennedy went to a street corner in Indianapolis and broke the news of his death to a balck audience which had gathered there. He said:

> ...we can make an effort, as Martin Luther King did, to understand and to comprehend, and to replace that violence, that stain of bloodshed that has spread across our land, with an effort to understand with compassion and love....I had a member of my family killed by a white man. But we have to make an effort in the United States, we have to make an effort to understand....What we need...is not division; what we need is not hatred; what we need...is not violence or lawlessness, but love and wisdom, and compassion towards those who still suffer within our country, whether they be white or they be black.[408]

Senator Kennedy concluded by quoting Aeschylus: "In our sleep, pain which cannot forget falls drop by drop upon the heart until, in our own despair, against our will, comes wisdom through the awful grace of God."[409] This quotation points to the center of the Christian Gospel for it speaks of a God who comes to man beyond every extremity, on the other side of despair, against man's prideful self-will, so that life may be renewed. The love and justice our society so desperately needs and the strength to move beyond despair to meaning is the gift of a gracious God.

Further, as we have seen in chapter two, God is that in the uni-

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[407]H. Richard Niebuhr, Radical Monotheism and Western Culture, p. 47.

[408]Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., "America 1968: The Politics of Violence," Harper's Magazine, Vol. CCXXXVII, (August, 1968), p. 24.

[409]Aeschylus, Quoted in "America 1968: The Politics of Violence," by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Jr., Harper's Magazine, p. 24.

verse which continues to accept man as he is so that in that acceptance man might once again strive to become that for which he was created. This is the meaning of Jesus' words on the cross, "Father, forgive them for they know not what they do." Jesus spoke in this sentence to a God whom he perceived as one who forgave so that men could repent, who loved so that men could love. Jesus knew that the character of the God he addressed was one who embraced men in order that their lives might be renewed rather than one who demanded renewal in order to embrace.

As opposed to Mumford's contention that man must make himself capable of loving and ready to receive love, the Christian faith affirms that God does this for men. He has created man capable of loving and through continuing acceptance of him, whatever his state, gives man the courage to accept himself and begin again. Man's freedom to live the inner-directed life, his ability to resist the encroachment of external authorities, roots in the fact that he knows an acceptance which no circumstance can deny, that of a loving God. In the same way that a child matures when he lives in an atmosphere of total acceptance by his parents, so men mature in an atmosphere of total acceptance by God. This does not imply a lack of direction and counsel and judgment. A child needs counsel. But the counsel is effective only in the context of unconditional acceptance.

The Christian does not deny that his position demands an act of faith. There is much about the universe in which he lives which tempts him to deny his trust in a God personally concerned with his welfare. But his trust is confirmed experientially because living on the basis of God's acceptance of him with all his infirmities, he finds the strength to renew his life. The freedom he knows results not from his own efforts

at self-discipline, as Mumford prescribes, but instead self-discipline results from the freedom granted by God. The personal renewal Mumford seeks will more likely appear in those who have been released rather than in those who seek to release themselves. This is not an invitation to man to seek release from responsibility for reshaping his world. It is an invitation to him, instead, to seek release for the sake of responsibility. Mumford has helped us keep alive a sense of the Divine in a world which seems intent on closing this aspect of man's consciousness. Unfortunately, he has not adequately related it to his primary reason for writing--renewal of life.

Mumford once used the phrase "Confidence in Creation" to describe the man who has not feared to transform himself and who is capable of facing his world without fear. He is one who has a sense of life's rich potentialities. He is able to offer alternatives to the fixations and rigidities of existing cultural and economic schemes because he knows that these are merely inadequate residues of the essential goodness of the creative process. This same process awaits deliverance by way of renewed men:

> ...here precisely is the deepest difference between the new person and the old, who gave to external conditions and external stimuli the initiative that living organisms and above all living persons must keep for themselves.[410]

The Christian, too, has confidence in creation, a confidence granted him by the Lord of creation. But this confidence results not from self-transformation but Divine transformation. It is this which makes him a new man capable of envisioning and assisting in the building of a new society. Since his confidence is not dependent on acceptance by men but

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[410]Mumford, The Conduct of Life, p. 290.

by God, he can live the inner-directed life which Mumford seeks.

Lewis Mumford has been of immense assistance both in helping us see the roots of man's present dilemma and in envisioning the kind of man needed if the world is to escape disaster and move toward maturity. He has reminded us that much of what we regard as normative is really the result of grievous historical mistakes; he has opened dimensions of man's nature which we neglect at our peril; and he has drawn for us a picture of a man capable of living creatively and one who could take advantage of the rich potentialities the contemporary world offers. Without neglecting the importance of external structures, he has rightly insisted that these are of secondary importance to the transformation of the inner man. Unfortunately, however, his positive program for renewal suffers because, although he tells us what we must do, he fails to provide us with the resources necessary to do it. This is particularly unfortunate because his concept of the divine, if more fully developed and taken more seriously by him, presents this possibility. Fuller development of the concept might have provided him the insight by which his admirable programs for renewal could be incarnated in the cadre of men and women he sees necessary to avert disaster. But perhaps this is to expect too much of one man's life and work. We are grateful for what he has given us and hopeful that others will provide the necessary additions and corrections.

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PRÉCIS OF THE THESIS

The thesis analyzes the doctrine of man in the thought of Lewis Mumford as this doctrine has emerged in an authorship extending over the past fifty years. In the thesis I contend that Mumford's analysis of man's present condition and his vision of renewed man are desperately needed at this point in history. I am in agreement with both analysis and vision in most essentials. My argument with him is a disagreement about how the vision can be manifested. In the thesis I develop in outline form an alternative program which builds upon Mumford's but attempts to correct it and go beyond it.

The thesis is divided into six chapters. The introductory chapter contains an outline of Mumford's writing career in which I highlight those books which appear pivotal. It is at this point that I indicate I will treat Mumford's work topically rather than historically because of his general consistency of viewpoint over the years. In the latter half of the chapter I argue that Mumford's concern for the internal life of man is needed in a world which tends to stress only external structural change when seeking renewal. I argue further that his stress on man's sense of mystery, his concern for broad historical perspective, and his teleological orientation serve as a corrective to particular currents of contemporary theology.

Chapter two is an analysis of Mumford's understanding of man's present plight. It is Mumford's conviction that contemporary man's value system is in a state of utter disorder because basic religious and moral values have been allowed to lapse, and elements in man's personality basic

to human life have been neglected in the pursuit of misdirected and uncontrolled power. In the chapter I contend that though Mumford is correct in looking to a "saving remnant" by which renewal might occur, he fails to present a program sufficient to develop the internal change needed in those who are to form this remnant.

In chapter three I highlight those men and movements which Mumford views as significant in forging our present crisis situation. He views the present as the ultimate result of a development at least five centuries in the making. This development resulted in the creation of Nineteenth Century mechanical-utilitarian man and his successor in the Twentieth Century. Romanticism had given promise of serving as a corrective to mechanical-utilitarian man but for a number of reasons this promise went unfulfilled.

Mumford is convinced that broad historical perspective is basic to human renewal. In chapter four I outline this concern and then turn to an analysis of the two historical periods which Mumford looks to particularly for guidance--Athens between the years 480 - 430 B.C. and Transcendentalist New England. Particular attention is paid to Sophocles, Socrates, Plato, Emerson, Whitman, Thoreau, and Melville.

Religion has taken on an increasing significance for Mumford over the years. In chapter five I outline this development and comment critically upon it. Central to the chapter is a discussion of Mumford's shift in thinking--from a view of an essentially meaningless universe to one which sees a continuous growth in meaning. Further, I argue that Mumford's contention that a "sense of the divine" is basic to human nature has immense significance for theology at a point in history when much contemporary theology seems intent on denying this "sense."

In the final chapter I present Mumford's Concept of the Person. In this chapter, Mumford's ideal man, the balanced personality, emerges, as does his proposal for manifesting this ideal. I agree basically with the vision but find his proposal for implementing it lacking in realism. I argue further that this is particularly unfortunate because one can find the seeds of a more adequate position in his mature thinking. Finally, I sketch an alternative approach to bring to actualization the vision which Mumford has so admirably drawn.

CURRICULUM VITAE

PAUL HENRY SHERRY

1933	Born December 25, in Tamaqua, Pennsylvania. Parents: Paul E. Sherry and Mary E. Sherry.
1951	Graduated from Tamaqua High School, Tamaqua, Pennsylvania.
1955	Graduated from Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, Pennsylvania, with a B.A. degree in Philosophy.
1957	Married Mary L. Thornburg (B.S., Marshall University and M.R.E., Union Theological Seminary) on June 4, 1957 in Huntington, W. Va.
1958	Graduated from Union Theological Seminary, New York City, with a B.D. degree.
1958-1961	Pastor, St. Matthew's United Church of Christ, Reading, Pennsylvania.
1958	Birth of daughter, Mary Beth.
1961	Birth of son, Paul David.
1961-1965	Pastor, Community United Church of Christ, Hasbrouck Heights, New Jersey.
1961-1963	Attended Drew University Graduate School, Madison, New Jersey.
1963-1969	Th. D. candidate, Union Theological Seminary, New York City.
1965-1968	Secretary for College Relations, United Church Board for Homeland Ministries.
1965	Editor, the Journal, Division of Higher Education, United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, New York City.
1969	Secretary for Planning and Strategy, United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, New York City.